

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

AUGUST 1, 2011

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the chairman, William Dial, on Monday, August 1, 2011, at 5:00 p.m., in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were Suzanne Litty, Thomas Costigan, James Deerin, and Jennifer Stanley.

The minutes of the meeting of July 11, 2011 were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. Permit #11-37, Stephen and Jane Selden, 100 Tilghman Street, remove and replace existing garage roof shingles to match house. Mr. Selden explained to the commission that he and his wife have a garage on their property which has a leaking roof which they would like to repair and replace it with shingles of the same type and color that would match their house. A motion was made by Mr. Costigan to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried without further discussion.
2. Permit #11-42, Tom Costigan and Pat Calvin, 212 Caroline Street, replace storm damaged shingle roof on garage at rear of property with metal standing seam roof; grey in color to match metal roof(s) on house. Mr. Costigan recused himself from the commission in order to present his application. Mr. Costigan explained to the commission that his garage was damaged from a storm on June 17th. He noted that he would like to upgrade and replace his garage roof from old shingles to a standing seam metal roof which would be gray in color. Mr. Deerin asked what type of roofing was on the main house. Mr. Costigan replied that it is covered mostly in shingle but that it did have four small metal roofs over the porch, front bay window, back bay window, and at the top which would match the proposed garage roofing. A motion was made by Ms. Litty to approve the application as submitted and second by Mrs. Stanley. The motion was carried with a vote of four with one abstaining vote from Mr. Costigan.
3. Permit #11-41, John Kendall, 307 S. Morris St., retaining wall for south lot line of property approximately 63' from street to rear. Mr. Kendall was represented by Mary Crabb of Crabb and Company, LLC in Oxford. Mrs. Crabb explained that Mr. Kendall was proposing to build a retaining wall between his house at 307 S. Morris Street and the neighboring property at 309 S. Morris Street. Mrs. Crabb presented the commission with diagrams of what was being proposed and a plat of the property. The front portion of the property and back 63' on the south lot line has a higher elevation than the property at 309 S. Morris Street. The proposal is to build a permanent retaining wall on Mr. Kendall's property. The wall will be constructed of concrete. It will have a footer, concrete wall, and a cap. Portions of the wall will be visible from

the street. As the grade falls, the wall will drop in height. Mrs. Crabb explained that on the backside of this wall there is a fence on the neighboring property at 309 S. Morris Street. The retaining wall will be 6 inches off the neighbor's fence. This particular area will help contain any run-off from the side of the house. The natural run-off swale will go down the driveway back up towards Morris Street. The retaining wall will not be higher than the fence that already exists in that area. The existing fence is about 30" tall. The retaining wall will be 24" above grade. Mr. Dial stated that he did not think the historic commission had any jurisdiction over the wall. Mrs. Crabb responded that she was told the HDC did because one would be able to see some of the wall from the street. Mr. Deerin asked that if one were standing in front of the house how much wall would be seen? Mrs. Crabb responded that maybe it would be about 6'. The fence was going to follow the grade so that when it first starts out it may only be 9 or 10 inches high. One would see more of the fence in the front and less of it as it goes back. The concrete would be parged. The capping could be brick, if the commission would prefer that. Ms. Litty asked if the whole wall could be brick. Mrs. Crabb responded that labor wise it would be a little more difficult and to put a brick veneer on the concrete would result in making the wall wider which would change the setbacks. Mr. Costigan asked about the driveway and what materials were going to be used for it. Mrs. Crabb responded they would be using white stone. Mr. Deerin stated that he thought a brick cap would look good on the wall. It was noted that the wall would be difficult to see because of the vegetation on the neighboring property. A motion was made by Mrs. Stanley to approve the application using the brick capping. The motion was seconded by Mr. Deerin and carried with one abstaining vote from Ms. Litty. Mr. Dial noted on the application that brick capping would be used. Mrs. Crabb asked that if they were to do a mock up of what the cap would like and bring it up to the town office, how soon could they start? Mr. Dial responded that as far as the HDC was concerned, they were good to go.

This concluded the review of building permit applications.

A consultation was held with Philip Logan, representing Preservation Green, LLC, that he and his wife have, regarding his wife's recent purchase of 103 Mill Street. Mr. Logan reminded the commission he had had a consultation with them regarding this property about a year ago. The property at 103 Mill Street is a low lying area that has had a lot of flooding. He added that they have a plan to deal with the water issues and will be working with Talbot County Stormwater Management and Environmental Health to turn this property into a modern stormwater management project. Mr. Logan also noted that he is hoping that a recently installed flood gate by the town will help with the problem. Other issues noted included the following:

- The existing building on the property is in terrible shape but has an interesting form.
- They are interested in grandfathering the building since it is right up on the property line in the back.
- The proposal is to create a preservation green horticultural design center for private use. It would essentially be a resource center for Ms. Paca's work where she would be experimenting with plants and also teaming up with local groups that are disabled by incorporating a work force of individuals who are disabled.

- The plan calls to restore and rebuild the existing one story building and add on to it. The existing roofline would be preserved. The building would be raised to get it above the floodplain. Currently the building has only 6'10" of head room inside. This would be increased in order to bring it up to the proper building code.
- They will be going to the Board of Appeals for a greenhouse request which is by exception in the zoning ordinance. The greenhouse would be an 18' x 50' single glass greenhouse. It may have some modern features but the idea is for it to look more traditional.
- There are plans to add a green roof on to the main building made up of drought resistant plants such as sedums and succulents which grow about 4 to 5 inches tall.
- There will be an orchard on the north side of the greenhouse and plantings along Mill Street and across Mill Street in front of the boatyard.
- There would be a two story proposed square which would be between the single story shack and greenhouse which would have stairs and an elevator.

Mr. Deerin asked if there was any historic value to anything currently on the property. Mr. Logan responded that they are looking at everything carefully and that they want to try to save as much of the existing structure as they can. He added that they would like to introduce ways of recycling water on the property by introducing cistern examples, and having a windmill as a symbolic example of how wind power can be used. Another plan is to use tile stoves for heat inside the buildings.

Cathy Bitter, a member of the audience and neighbor to this property, asked about the smoke output from the proposed tile stoves. Mr. Logan responded that tile stoves do not put out a lot of smoke. He explained that when one puts logs in the stove there is space in the stove so that by the time the smokes gets ready to go out all the condensation is dissipated through the tile stove so there is virtually no smoke at all. Mr. Dial verified that this was true. Ms. Bitter's second question was if any fans were going to be needed to cool the greenhouse. Mr. Logan responded that a fan would be needed to cut down the amount of heat going into the greenhouse and that a fan would be used which would be on the side facing the boatyard. He added that he would have to look into when the fan would be running and how loud it would be.

Mr. Deerin brought up the issue of solar panels. Mr. Logan responded that he had forgotten to mention they were also looking into using solar panels on their property and that they can possibly get a grant from a solar company. However, they will not be proposing to use the solar panels on their buildings but instead they would be proposing to use the solar panels on the small covers located in their proposed composting areas. He added that sometimes solar panels that are tacked onto a roof do not always look very nice but if they are designed as part of a shed roof, depending on how it is detailed, they can be attractive.

This concluded the commission's consultation with Mr. Logan.

Mr. Dial called on a member of the audience, Richard Lesser, representative from a solar company, to ask if he wanted to speak. Mr. Lesser stated he had brought with him some guidelines regarding the use solar energy that were in use in the area. James Dewar, property owner at 106 N. Morris Street, who met with the commission at last month's meeting to present his application to install solar panels on his home, was also in attendance. Mr. Dial addressed Mr. Dewar and told him that he was not on this night's agenda but that the commission was still working on alternative energy issues and that they had to wait until they could meet with the Commissioners before they can revisit his application. He then addressed Mr. Lesser and informed him the commission was not yet ready to talk with him about alternative energy.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby
Assistant Clerk