

HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HAPC)

MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, September 13, 2023

6:15 P.M.

I. Call to Order

The September 13, 2023 meeting of the Oxford Historic and Architectural Preservation Commission was called to order at 6:15 p.m. by Chris Skoglund.

Those members present: Chris Skoglund, Alex French, Dana Miller, Hueston Kyger, Brad Spurlock, Sean Wagner

Those members excused: Corey Watt

Staff members present: Sam Perry, Community Development Director

Staff members excused: None

II. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Kyger made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. French seconded the motion. All were in favor.

III. Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

IV. Approval of Minutes of April 12, 2023

Mr. Wagner made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Miller seconded the motion. All were in favor.

V. Old Business

a. HAPC-2022-06, 48 E Park Place, CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, new mixed use building, Scott Webb, Applicant/Agent, Revisions to approved plans and additional information

Mr. Perry informed the Commission that during the Final Zoning inspection some changes were found that were different from what was approved by HAPC and on the Building Permits. Staff reached out to the applicant and Mr. Webb and the owners have been addressing some of these changes. Mr. Perry drew attention to the Memorandum that is included in the packet and gives a brief summary of what changes are there.

Chair Skoglund invited Mr. Webb to share his thoughts and the slides he prepared with the Commission. Mr. Perry specified the two main changes he would like to discuss are the window dividers and the brick on the south side of the building.

Mr. Webb started his presentation stating he is here on behalf of the owners. The first slide

showed the rendering and the photo of the finished building, side by side. Mr. Webb explained the drawing does show brick all the way. However, there is an addition on the side of the Sigma Chi building with an angled roofline. Mr. Webb explained that wall belongs to Sigma Chi and cannot lay brick from nor set scaffolding on it. Because of this, the wall was laid from inside. Mr. Webb emphasized on the drawing it was a brick wall all the way but it was simply missed. To correct the problem, they brought the brick back around as far as they could but the rest of the building was painted.

Mr. Webb next talked about the issue with the cornice. Mr. Webb said the workers did not take the cornice all the way. It was caught and the problem is being corrected, and that is why part of the cornice has not been painted yet. Mr. Webb also explained that they used Dryvit on the stairway cover building to minimize drawing attention to it, giving a flat look.

Mr. Webb next addressed the comments on windows, lights and awnings. Mr. Webb explained the green awning is under fabrication, and the awning for the residential side is going to be installed soon. The tenant for that space is working on the graphic design and it is easier to place the design on the awning while on the ground. Mr. Webb added there will be an awning installed on the west side of the building where the patio is.

The discussion continued with the lightings. Mr. Webb explained the indirect lighting for the awning will be installed just as it shown on the rendering. The four boxes on the building are additional lights. Mr. Webb noted his client choose to install more lightings, and this was done without his knowledge.

The last topic that Mr. Webb addressed was the windows. Mr. Webb explained the approval was the exterior vertical window dividers and it was highlighted on the approved plans. The contractor missed this detail. As a result, the installed windows have interior dividers. Mr. Webb further explained when these dividers are inside, they can get lost and broken. If the dividers are on the outside, they collect dirt. In addition to this, the outside dividers are just pieces of metals glued to the surface of the glass. Mr. Webb then presented some examples from the Uptown area such as the DuBois building, Chipotle and Tous les Jour. He explained that modern manufacturers now put these dividers between two panels to avoid those problems that Mr. Webb noted a few minutes ago. Mr. Webb mentioned there was a discussion with the window manufacturer and the dividers can be installed on the exterior. The dividers are 16-inch long metal pieces with a double-sided tape. However, these will not be visible much after the screen is installed on the windows.

Mr. Perry stated using windows with outside muntins would add depth. Mr. Perry inquired from Mr. Webb if he does cost estimate for the bidding process with manufacturer details. Mr. Webb responded he does not do that. Once the plans are approved, he turns it over to the client and is not involved ordering the material.

Ms. French wanted to know when the mistake was discovered; when the windows arrived or installed. Mr. Webb said Mr. Perry discovered the problem while conducting final zoning inspection on the building. Ms. French stated it would have been good if the discovery had happened when the windows arrived. Mr. Perry added if there is a repeat pattern of failure, it is a good idea to do an inspection to make sure the right material was ordered and delivered. Mr. Webb mentioned that being very specific of what kind of windows should be installed would

help prevent situations like this. Similar to when bringing in samples and materials of paint, brick etc. when presenting the proposed project. Ms. French emphasized if during the construction a problem arises and to fulfill the approved plan might not be possible, inform the Commission about it and discuss the option thus, avoiding from the cumulative effects.

Mr. Perry drew the Commission's attention to the fact the Design Guidelines will be updated soon and it could reveal that such details may not be as important on a non-historic new build in the Historic District. Mr. Webb added that most windows, for example, are now vinyl thus making it difficult to achieve the historic look.

Mr. Skoglund pointed out that this building is what a person can expect to see in this era, and the fact that this building is not a historic building or a retrofit it is a new built. Mr. Skoglund liked the idea of adding a metal strip to the window thus having the representation of the divided light in a recently built building. Mr. Skoglund inquired from Mr. Perry whether there are up lit buildings Uptown. Mr. Perry said there are. However, Mr. Skoglund was not in favor of an up lit building.

Mr. Miller wanted to know what windows Mr. Webb's client would have chosen if there had not been any requirement. Mr. Webb said it would have been what has been installed. Mr. Miller thought the Commission could take into consideration the fact that the Design Guidelines will soon be updated and it seems the divided windows were more aesthetic than having functional purpose. Likely, they produced this type of window at that time. Mr. Webb pointed out how manufacturers have changed their window making process resulting in less depth outside.

Mr. Wagner wanted clarification whether the applicant needed to come to the Board before installing additional lights. Mr. Perry answered they should have come or have an administrative approval. Mr. Wagner emphasized the fact that the Commission is giving a lot of additional accommodation to the owner. Mr. Webb noted his client did not inform him about any changes. Otherwise, he would have informed them the need of discussing any changes with HAPC or staff.

Ms. French expressed her being torn between two things in regards to the windows. She expressed her understanding the modern side of things such as the building, how the windows are made differently but also the fact that the Commission had made a decision. Ms. French then added that she does lean towards adding the metal strip to the exterior.

Mr. Spurlock agreed with the Commission members that these changes should have been presented to the Commission. However, he is in favor of the changes and how the building looks. Mr. Spurlock reasoned if this was a historic building in a historic district, the preservation should be the key. On the other hand, this is a contemporary building and it should be complimentary to the historic district, not necessarily replicate those historic buildings around. Mr. Spurlock felt this building communicates that it is a contemporary one and not a historic building that has been rehabbed with other materials.

Mr. Kyger would have liked to see more depth on the building and the divided windows. However, he did like the awning and the lighting because they contribute to the streetscape nicely. Mr. Kyger thought that at this point it is not feasible to expect the redoing of the

windows. Mr. Kyger strongly agreed with the Commission members that the changes should have been presented to them before built. Summarizing his thoughts, Mr. Kyger was in favor of the building.

Ms. French asked Mr. Webb if the metal strips glued to the exterior of the window would come off or weakens the integrity of the window. Mr. Webb said the challenge is that these strips are not only glued to a surface that changes temperatures but also expanding and contracting. In light of this information, Ms. French was in favor of rather leaving the windows as is then eventually have some with a missing metal strip. Mr. Spurlock affirmed he sees quite a bit of these missing metal strips/muntins when conducting architectural profiling on historic buildings. Ms. French also thought that the lighting would be a nice feature during events Uptown such as Red Brick Friday.

Mr. Skoglund agreed with Mr. Kyger's and Mr. Wagner's point of view.

Ms. French made a motion to accept the changes as noted in Mr. Perry's Memorandum. Mr. Spurlock seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Webb suggested adding specified windows to list of allowed materials thus avoiding from confusion and mistakes. Mr. Skoglund wondered how other cities handling situations like this. Mr. Spurlock said the ADRB in Hamilton has a specific list on what windows are allowed. If the applicant proposes something that is not on the list they have to come before the board. Mr. Skoglund pointed out such list could be included in the soon updated Design Guidelines.

b. Updates on Indigenous People Cultural Preservation

Mr. Perry reported he reached out to Andy Sawyer, Education Outreach Specialist at Myaamia Center, suggested by Steve Gordon. Mr. Sawyer suggested Mr. Perry to reach out to other cities and inquiry their program for cultural preservation. Mr. Perry contacted Mr. Nathan Bevil, CLG (Certified Local Governments) Coordinator. The cities Mr. Bevil gave Mr. Perry were Savannah, Alexandria, and Scottsdale that have legislation on cultural preservation. Two approach would be: (1) to require archeological study/survey only on public projects the City does through the funding resources by the Federal Government, or (2) require it on both public and private projects in certain areas where the likelihood to find mounds or ceremonial grounds are high.

Mr. Skoglund talked about an annexation approach. He thought it would be good to see if there might be any mounds in the surrounding 1-2 mile radius outside the City limits in case annexation happens on those areas. Mr. Perry added if a project is federally funded, a Phase 1 archeological study is conducted.

Mr. Miller and Mr. Kyger both joined to the conversation talking about a possibility of providing a map that identifies these close areas that might have mounds or a grave site. Thus, when the annexed land undergoes development, the owner/developer would know what the City requires to be done before starting any groundwork.

Mr. Perry noted when a Phase 1 archeological study is done, it needs to be recorded in the State GIS data. Mr. Miller wondered whether the sites the Mr. Kyger showed the Commission are in the historical inventory. Mr. Spurlock said not all of them because there are few sources for the

location of these sites: 1836 and 1855 maps and two or three published books. The mounds that are located in Butler Country are on these five sources. Anything else would be found accidentally.

Mr. Skoglund summarized that after the researches the Commission did not find mounds or ceremonial grounds in the surrounding areas. Mr. Perry pointed out the Commission could ask Council for a symbolic resolution stating to keep in mind the possibility of discovering a historical site when the City considers growth or annexation. Ms. French offered to take the resolution to Council.

c. Updates on Historic Tours

Mr. Spurlock reported there were two tours recently. The Hillcrest tour had 21 in attendance and the Hilltop part 2 tour had 28 people. The final tour is scheduled for the upcoming weekend. It is University hosted by Mr. Miller.

Ms. French provided update on the Cemetery Tours. She mentioned the importance of good marketing. All tours will start at 11 am. On October 7th, 13 open spots remained out of 25, on the 21st 15 spots are still open, and on the 28th only 2 spots remained. Mr. Spurlock added they will do the finalization for this tour on the upcoming Monday selecting the grave sites that will be on the tours.

Mr. Perry suggested more structured advertising for the Historic Tours, perhaps on the City Website as an event that people can sign up. Mr. Skoglund mentioned talking with Enjoy Oxford to advertise these tours on the billboard the Uptown Park. The Commission discussed ideas how the tours, both the Historic and Cemetery, can be better advertised and marketed.

d. Updates on any projects in the Uptown Historic District

Mr. Skoglund inquired the status of the proposed hotel project at 22 S Beech. Mr. Perry said the permit has been approved but the applicant has not submitted a demolition permit or the estimate for demolition bond. The COA or Conditional Use approval is about to expire, added Mr. Perry.

Mr. Skoglund wanted to know if there are any updates on the old funeral home. Mr. Perry said there are none.

Mr. Perry shared with the Commission there are no plans submitted for the old Coop Book Store. The owner's architect inquired about rules and regulations, what the City would like to see happen but nothing has been submitted.

Mr. Skoglund wondered what happens to the building at 200 W High Street that was used as an office while the Caroline Harrison building at 131 W High Street was under construction. Mr. Perry said they approached staff to talk about options such as rezoning and demolition. Staff gave them guidance potentially allowing a rezoned neighborhood business. This way the building can be preserved. It would also allow a Conditional Use for a restaurant.

The next update was on 22 N College Avenue. Mr. Perry said the construction of a ramp is

underway to provide access to the building for those of with a wheelchair. Interior working is underway as well.

The building at 21 N College Avenue is receiving occupants. Shana Rosenberg's store, Thread Up Oxford, has moved in, and a pet supply store will occupy the middle part.

VI. Administrative Decisions (Previously Decided)

HAPC-2023-04, 16 S Campus Avenue, CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, hanging sign for Jewelry Shop, JG Jewelry LLC, Applicant/Agent

Mr. Skoglund stated one particular point in the approval process was to make sure that the hanging sign would be high enough from the ground. Mr. Perry added the applicant applied for a variance, which will be heard later this month.

Mr. Skoglund reminded there was another administrative approval for signage for the pastry shop (Tous les Jour) Uptown at 5 W High Street.

VII. Adjournment

Ms. French made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kyger seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm.