

HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HAPC)
MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, November 9, 2022
6:15 P.M.

I. Call to Order

The November 9, 2022 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, Sean Wagner, Alex French, Hueston Kyger, Brad Spurlock, Corey Watt, and Dana Miller.

Those members excused: None

Staff members present: Sam Perry, Community Development Director

Staff members excused: None

II. Approval of Agenda

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

III. Public Comments

There was none.

IV. Approval of Minutes of September 14, 2022

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

V. Old Business

HAPC-2022-04, 10 North Beech Street, CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, alteration to existing building alley façade, Robert Humphrey, Architect/Agent, TABLED

Mr. Watt made a motion to remove the case from the table. Mr. Spurlock seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Perry gave a brief overview of the case. Mr. Perry stated the packet contained documents that reflect substantial change from the original submittal back in the summer. Mr. Perry recalled the original proposal was more of a temporary roof structure that could be retractable. After reviewing the comments, the applicant decided to propose a permanent structure. Mr. Perry added the office received a more detailed set of plans on Monday, which is not part of the packet but is available in hard copy for the Commission Members to look at. Therefore, this set of plans did not receive staff analysis.

Mr. Perry had the plans displayed on the screen. Mr. Perry explained it is a one-story addition

in the same location as it was originally proposed. Side view is similar footprint, using brick and mortar, and metal roof. Mr. Perry added the upward acting garage door would remain as it was previously proposed.

Mr. Perry explained the typical process is to get more details on the cross sections and articulations even though it is a small addition. The Commission also likes to see material samples if those are new to that particular district, which in this case is not new. Mr. Perry noted there is no precedent how an addition to a new structure is processed. Mr. Perry added the Commission has similar option than any other time, which are “Approved”, “Approved with modifications”, “Deny”, or “Table”. Mr. Perry said he mentioned to Mr. Humphrey that withdrawing this application and submit a new one would be another option.

Mr. Perry also noted there is a zoning issue with this plan since buildings in the Uptown Historic District are required to be two stories. However, the code does not get into details when it comes to a not stand-alone building. Mr. Perry said the way this could be resolved is to either make it to two stories, or apply for a variance. Mr. Watt added if the proposal approved as presented by the HAPC there still has to be blending of multiple processes for the project to go forward, for example the variance request. Mr. Perry mentioned that in the past there was an example where the HAPC approval acted as a partial recommendation to the BZA. Because one of the criteria is about the essential character of the neighborhood, the BZA could use the HAPC recommendation in their decision making process.

Mr. Skoglund commented on the fact that he would like the applicant to provide more information than what was in the packet. Mr. Skoglund would prefer to see a new submission, and decline the first application since there are significant changes compared to the original submittal. Mr. Skoglund also suggested to use this meeting for a pre-application discussion and to give feedback to Mr. Humphrey on this new proposal, and then Mr. Humphrey could re-submit a new application.

Mr. Kyger had similar thoughts that of Mr. Skoglund. Mr. Kyger said he had quite a few questions on the windows, materials, and the door as well. Mr. Kyger wondered what the HAPC purview would be when it comes to an addition.

Mr. Watt mentioned the building at 45 E High Street, how detailed the conversation was at the HAPC meeting when the building was remodeled. Mr. Watt also acknowledged that this proposal at 10 N Beech Street is an uncharted territory so-to-speak. Mr. Watt was concerned about setting a precedent with building height in the Uptown Historic District. The other concern that Mr. Watt had is related to expanding, offering more outdoor seating areas in harmony with Mr. Copenbaker’s initiatives. Mr. Watt pointed out that this proposal has many bricks.

Mr. Skoglund inquired from Mr. Watt whether he was concerned about this one-story addition setting a precedent in a future time. Mr. Kyger added that it would be beneficial to find out that the proposal is one story because of the power lines or something else.

Mr. Watt said he just wants to be cautious. Mr. Watt used the example where Uptown has a history of patios being enclosed and ending up with another story on top. Mr. Perry added an approval now does not mean that a policy or a code cannot be changed later.

Mr. Miller inquired from Mr. Watt if 45 E High was an outdoor space. Mr. Watt said it was enclosed but it sunk and needed to bring it up to level, and it was also somewhat two stories, and it was an addition. Mr. Watt explained his concerns about being so cautious by stating that while Planning Commission makes recommendation to City Council, HAPC does not really have that layer.

Mr. Wagner shared the same concerns as the other Commission members, and he did emphasize he wants to see more details before making a decision on this case.

Ms. French mentioned three big areas as her concerns: the alignment of windows, the opening of the entrance to get in the building, and the cornice structure mirrored to be more in line with the rest of the building.

Mr. Spurlock stated he is not necessarily opposed to a one-story structure since the existing building is contemporary in the Historic District. Mr. Spurlock did add that he prefers more open outdoor area than an addition. Ms. French added there are lot of questions about the goal of the outdoor space. Mr. Spurlock brought up Pies and Pints in Liberty Center as an example of an in/outdoor area with garage doors acting as windows.

Mr. Skoglund invited Mr. Humphrey to join to the conversation. Mr. Skoglund emphasized that the Commission is in favor of the original proposal, but this new proposal has significant changes and the HAPC would like to know more details.

Mr. Humphrey said the windows fold up and he shared a link in the documents submitted on Monday that illustrates what types of windows they have in mind. Mr. Humphrey stated his takeaway from the last meeting was the Commission's concern about the permanency of the girder. Because of this concern came the idea of doing a permanent structure with a roof.

Mr. Skoglund re-emphasized the importance of sharing as much details with the Commissions as possible.

Mr. Humphrey confirmed the addition would be open on each end, the stone header and bricks would match the existing building, and the overhead doors and windows would be open during an event.

Mr. Skoglund observed that the proposed windows are not stacked or in line with the existing ones. Mr. Humphrey acknowledged and agreed if the two long windows aligned with the existing ones, it would be a better look. Mr. Skoglund added this would contribute to the continuity.

Mr. Skoglund shared with the applicant what options there are in proceeding with this application, or possibly withdraw the current one, use this meeting as feedback from the HAPC and resubmit a new application.

Mr. Wagner wanted to know the applicant's timeline on this project. Mr. Humphrey was not sure. Mr. Humphrey would like the Commission to treat his recent submittal as a revision to the original for the next HAPC meeting.

Mr. Skoglund said one option is to re-table this case to the December meeting. However, Mr. Skoglund wanted to give the applicant the opportunity to hear the Commission's feedback and incorporate those to the plans, and come back to the HAPC meeting with it next month.

Mr. Watt agreed with Mr. Skoglund to have a pre-application conversation now that can help the applicant how to proceed with the submittal. Mr. Watt pointed out that the longer an application drags out, the harder it gets to see and remember the details. The rest of the Commission members agreed with Mr. Watt.

Ms. French inquired if the Commission could hear more about the outdoor seating area plan. Mr. Skoglund suggested deciding first whether the Commission table the application to the December meeting. Mr. Watt added if the Commission wants to have more discussion about this item, it needs to take place before tabling it.

Mr. Skoglund inquired if Mr. Copenbaker has any comments. Mr. Copenbaker emphasized he is in favor of the outdoor seating area, but added that the plans changed quite a bit.

Mr. Miller wanted to know what Mr. Copenbaker thoughts were on the doors. Mr. Copenbaker said he would like to have more details on it.

Mr. Skoglund wondered whether the applicant could request a permit to utilize the paved street as outdoor seating area with this proposal. Mr. Perry said it is not applicable in this case because it is an underdeveloped area. Mr. Perry added it is more applicable to areas where the historic fabric already exists. For example, in the case of Fiesta Charra, the buildings are already there, whereas the area around the proposal are not developed. Mr. Skoglund was thinking about future time when the other side of the alley is developed. Mr. Perry said in that case the paved street could be utilized. It could be an alteration to the addition. Mr. Spurlock shared the same point of view.

Mr. Skoglund asked Mr. Humphrey whether the east-west side stay open. Mr. Humphrey said the idea was not to close the opening in order to create an outdoor area, and not a space that would be part of inside. Mr. Watt was in favor of the open-air concept more than a structure with roof. Mr. Watt's concern was more for the aesthetic look, to have a thin cornice type of roof or a thinner version of the currently proposed roof. Mr. Watt would like to see columns with the decorative fencing. Ms. French suggested repeating the brick arches with the little lights to match the already existing ones. The Commission liked Ms. French's suggestion, and they all agreed on the flat roof as well.

Mr. Humphrey stated he would make some sketches, communicate, and meet with Mr. Perry before coming back to the Commission next month with the proposal. Mr. Humphrey thanked the Commission for their feedback.

Mr. Watt made a motion to table this case until the December meeting. Ms. French seconded the motion. All were in favor.

VI. Administrative Decisions (Previously Decided)

HAPC-2022-08, 7 ½ East High Street, CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, new wall sign, Timothy Hoskins, Applicant/Agent

Mr. Kyger inquired whether this business was in the basement. Mr. Perry said it is.

HAPC-2022-09, 28 West High Street, CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, west side exterior wall color change, Dollar Investments LLC, Tom Kachos, Applicant

Mr. Kyger recalled the HAPC approved the red color not that long ago.

Ms. French wondered since the wall is being painted if this was an opportunity to collaborate with Public Arts and put a mural on there one day. Mr. Perry noted he saw a historic photo that showed painting on this façade of the building.

The Commission had a brief discussion on potential avenues to restore an original mural/painting on a building. Ms. French offered to reach out to Amber at Public Arts.

Mr. Skoglund commented on the progress of work at the Alexander House. Mr. Skoglund thanked the members for their diligent work tonight.

Mr. Miller reported two successful tours took place in Oxford since the last HAPC meeting. Mr. Miller also commented on the programs he attended provided by the Lane Library and Mr. Spurlock. Mr. Miller noted he is still working on the NACPC report.

Ms. French attended the Sacred Sites of Oxford tour organized by the Comparative Religion Department. Ms. French thought it could be another potential added tour in the future. Ms. French informed the Commission that the ownership change in the status of Oxford Cemetery would make the Cemetery Tour at twilight possible next Halloween.

Mr. Spurlock talked about some of the programs the Lane Library has and will have in the future.

VII. Adjournment

Mr. Watt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kyger seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:49 pm.