

OXFORD PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes – May 13, 2014

MEMBERS: Mike Ready, Chair; Jonathan Eady, Vice-Chair; Vivian Harris and Ron Manson. Shawn Gaither, Secretary and Penny England were absent.

STAFF: Bob Schwartz, city manager and zoning administrator.

GUESTS: Ms. Evelyn Belcher and Mr. Jerry Belcher, Steve Kapp, and James Johnson, Daniel Parson, Margaret Dugan, and Kendra Mayfield with Oxford College.

OPENING: Mr. Ready called the meeting to order and welcomed the guests.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Upon motion of Mr. Manson, seconded by Ms. Harris, the minutes for the meeting of April 8 were approved.

Evelyn Ann Belcher (storage building) – Ms. Belcher submitted an application for a development permit to construct a portable storage building in the rear yard of her property at 212 East Richardson Street. Mr. Belcher said this was not going to be a storage building but was going to be an aluminum topped carport. It will be at least 20 feet from the back property line. There were some discussion of how far it will be from the side property line. After the discussion, the Belcher's agreed to locate it 10 feet from the side property line to be in conformance with the zoning ordinance. This will avoid having a public hearing on a variance in front of City Council.

Upon motion of Mr. Eady, seconded by Ms. Harris, the request for the carport in the backyard of the Belcher's was approved. This will include a 10 foot side setback. All members voted in favor.

Sunbelt Builders on behalf of Oxford College (Barn) - Steve Kapp submitted an application for a development permit for the construction of a barn for the organic farm at 406 Emory Street. Daniel Parson, Oxford College organic farmer, will also present to represent the college. The new barn will have a colored metal roof it will be wood framed and will be painted in earth tones. The barn will be 60' x 40'. There will be a small air conditioner for the office. There will be a solar powered fan to cool the inside of the barn. The Planning Commission discussed the location of the barn with Mr. Kapp and Mr. Parson. The barn will be located where the old shed was on this property but it will be very much larger. The advantage of locating the barn behind the house is that it will not be so visible from Emory Street.

Upon motion of Mr. Manson seconded by Mr. Eady the request for a development permit for the construction of the barn for the organic farm was approved. All members voted in favor.

Oxford College (Hoophouse) – Daniel Parson, organic farmer, has submitted an application for a development permit for the construction of a movable hoophouse in the garden to the north of the farm house. The hoop house is a temporary portable structure. It will be about 16 feet tall and approximately 30' x 48' in size. The hoop house will be covered with plastic sheeting and will work somewhat like a greenhouse. The Planning Commission discussed how visible the hoop house will be for the neighbors along Wentworth Drive.

Upon motion of Mr. Manson seconded by Mr. Eady the request for a development permit for the construction of the hoop house was approved. All members voted in favor.

Oxford College (pre-application discussion of a fence for the organic farm) – Daniel Parson has asked for a pre-application discussion for the installation of a perimeter fence at the organic farm - 406 Emory St. Mr. Parson said that the fence will keep deer out of his garden. Everyone agreed deer are problem to anyone growing anything in Oxford. The fence will be located on the property line as much as possible. On the Wentworth Street side of the property it will be located inside the tree line. On the east side of the property it will be located as close to the woods as possible depending on where the fence contractor decides it could be located. That portion of the property is very wet. On the Bonnell Street side it will be located on the property line. On the Emory Street side it will be located on the property line. The fence will be galvanized steel, 2" x 4" horse fencing. Mr. Parson suggested this will be less visible than chain-link fence.

The Planning Commission expressed concern about the visibility of the fence. In some cases it might look like a concentration camp rather than a farm. They understood the dual purpose of the fence. It is to keep deer out but is to maintain visibility of the farm for people driving by. The ordinance limits the height to a 4 foot fence in the front yard and limits the construction materials. The Planning Commission suggested that Mr. Parson bring samples of the fence along with a specific location to the next meeting. It is easier to have one variance approved rather than several. It might make sense to only ask for a variance on the height of the front fence rather than the construction materials. Any variance agreed to by the Planning Commission will be recommended to City Council for final approval. This will require several meetings.

***Oxford College (four requests)** – Margaret Dugan submitted a request on behalf of Oxford College for A. the transportation hub, B. Williams gymnasium parking lot, C. Moore Street sidewalk, and D. parking lot expansion. Most of this work does not require a building permit but it is significant enough to require a development permit. Any work in the city right-of-way will have to be approved subsequently by City Council. The Planning Commission determined to deal with the requests in order and separately.

A. Transportation hub - The transportation hub is a response to the request of the Planning Commission that the temporary bus stop be relocated by the time Fleming Hall construction is completed. James Johnson, Emory landscape architect, presented a copy of the large-format

plans for the transportation hub. He discussed the projected traffic flow for the new bus stop with the members of the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission was appreciative that the college was making good on its promise to have a permanent bus stop located before Fleming Hall was finished.

Upon motion of Mr. Eady, seconded by Ms. Harris, the construction of the transportation hub within the Tarbutton parking lot was approved. All members voted in favor.

B. Williams gymnasium parking lot and sidewalk - Mr. Johnson introduced a discussion of several changes to the Williams gymnasium parking lot. In addition, Mr. Johnson discussed the future use of the service drive which will happen when the science building construction is finished. The members discussed several aspects of this service drive. Mr. Johnson will return with further information when that change is imminent.

Upon motion of Mr. Eady, seconded by Mr. Manson, the changes proposed to the Williams gym parking lot were approved. All members voted in favor.

C. Moore Street sidewalk - Mr. Johnson presented a plan to construct a sidewalk along the north side of Moore Street from Haygood to the parking lot at Williams gymnasium. The Planning Commission held a long discussion with Mr. Johnson about several alternatives. Ms. Harris wanted to make sure that whatever changes were done would help protect the students who walk on the sidewalk. One of the problems with Moore Street it is that it has a very narrow right-of-way. Some of the work to be done will be on the city right-of-way and will require subsequent approval of City Council. The Planning Commission asked that Mr. Johnson consider the possibility of widening the road. To do that, Mr. Johnson will have to consult with city staff. The Planning Commission asked that Mr. Johnson return to the next meeting of the Planning Commission with more detailed drawings so the Planning Commission could make a decision on this issue.

D. Parking lot expansion - Mr. Johnson presented a plan to create additional parking spaces (approximately 104) in the large parking lot behind Haygood Hall. The Planning Commission discussed the methods that Mr. Johnson was planning to use to accommodate storm water and run off. Fencing of the parking lot was also discussed.

Upon motion of Mr. Manson, seconded by Ms. Harris, the parking lot construction and expansion was approved. All members voted in favor.

Oxford College (basketball court) – Margaret Dugan submitted an application for a development permit for the construction of a half-court basketball court behind Williams gymnasium. The Planning Commission reviewed a large scale drawing of the basketball court with Mr. Johnson and Ms. Dugan. Whether or not the basketball court will be fenced or lit at night was discussed. The Planning Commission reminded the college of the experience with the previous basketball court. It was felt that because this location that is surrounded by other college buildings the experience may be a little different.

Upon motion of Mr. Eady, seconded by Ms. Harris, the construction of a half-court basketball court was approved. All members voted in favor.

Oxford College future development plan - Ms. Dugan and Mr. Johnson presented a map showing several changes to the Oxford College future development plan. They also presented several amendments to the future development plan dated May 2014 as shown below:

Oxford College Future Development Plan
Amendments
May 2014

3c Acreage of athletic and / or recreational facilities

1. The construction of a 5740 square foot basketball half court is planned. The basketball half court is intended to enhance the athletic and recreational experience at Oxford College.

3d Number of parking spaces

1. Lot c - Branham East Café Loop parking is being eliminated. Currently 64 spaces will be 0 at the beginning of the new Science Building construction. After the Science Building construction is complete, 11 parking spaces will be restored for building access and delivery but the primary parking area will be eliminated and landscaped green space will be restored.
2. Lot e - Tarbutton Lot is being reduced from 99 spaces to 80 spaces. This lot will house the Transportation Hub. The construction of the Transportation Hub will reduce parking spaces by 19.
3. Lot I - Williams Gymnasium Lot will be reduced from 48 spaces to 42 spaces in the process of angling the parking spaces of the lot, a net reduction of six spaces.
4. Parking lots are being planned to the north and west of the Facilities Maintenance Barn. These lots will add approximately 100 spaces.

3f. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation along city streets and public spaces

1. The Williams Gymnasium parking lot will become one way. Vehicles will enter at the new west entrance and exit from the current exit on the east. All traffic will flow from both the Seney Lot and the Williams Lot to exit one way onto Moore Street.
2. A pedestrian sidewalk is being planned for construction. The sidewalk will connect the east side of the Williams Gymnasium parking lot to Haygood Street across from Murdy Hall.

Since the Planning Commission had discussed each of the issues in the amendments during the discussion of the previous development applications this discussion was relatively short.

Upon motion of Ms. Harris seconded by Mr. Manson the amendments to the Oxford college future development plan were referred favorably to City Council.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Margaret Dugan announced that Kendra Mayfield will be the liaison for Oxford College with the City of Oxford in the future.

Also, at the end of the meeting, the members of the Planning Commission discussed the timing for its June meeting. Several members will be out of town on the second Tuesday of June.

Therefore, the next meeting of the Planning Commission will be on the first Tuesday of June or June 3 at 7 PM. The meeting will be upstairs in the small conference room.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Ready adjourned the meeting at 9:10 PM.

Submitted by:

Bob Schwartz, zoning administrator