

OXFORD PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes – December 9, 2014

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

STAFF: Bob Schwartz, city manager and zoning administrator.

GUESTS: Kendra Mayfield, Marguerite Abd El-Shahid, and James Johnson with Oxford College; and Debbie Fritz, architect with Lord, Aeck, and Sargent.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Upon motion of Mr. Eady, seconded by Ms. Harris, the minutes for the meeting of November 11, 2014 were approved.

OXFORD COLLEGE DINING HALL SETBACK VARIANCE REQUESTS – Oxford College has submitted two variance requests to accommodate the construction of a new dining hall. The property is at 801 Asbury. It is bounded by Asbury, Pierce, and Wesley with private property to the north.

Mr. Ready wanted to let the representatives of Oxford College know that the right-of-way for Asbury as shown on their drawings is not straight. That is, it bends halfway through their property. Based on the way the City of Oxford was laid out that is incorrect. The right-of-way should be a straight line. There followed a discussion between Mr. Eady and representatives of the college about the deeds for the property and the correct right-of-way line. Finally, it was noted by Mr. Ready that the college needed to be absolutely sure of the right-of-way line before starting construction. This would not affect the discussion of a variance of the setback requirements.

Ms. Abd El-Shahid reviewed the schematic drawing with the Planning Commission. Miss Fritz reviewed several of the other exhibits and then the two letters which she had prepared requesting the two variances. She noted that the property in question is wedge-shaped and trapezoidal and therefore is hard to build on. She reported that other buildings and houses along Wesley and Asbury are also very close to the right-of-way line.

Ms. Mayfield reported that the programming required by the new dining hall will take every inch available on this lot. Mr. Eady questioned whether or not a one foot setback would work. Miss Abd El-Shahid stated that they may not use all of the property up to the build to line, but they are trying to be realistic by requesting a zero setback to give them flexibility in the final design of the building. There was further discussion of the location of the loading dock and how delivery trucks would access the new dining hall.

Upon motion of Mr. Manson, seconded by Ms. Harris, the Planning Commission approved a zero setback on Asbury for recommendation to City Council for a variance. All members voted in favor.

Mr. Manson and Mr. Eady had a short discussion about the request on Wesley.

Upon motion of Mr. Manson, seconded by Ms. Harris, the Planning Commission approved a zero setback on Wesley for recommendation to City Council for a variance. All members voted in favor.

OXFORD COLLEGE SIGN REQUESTS - Oxford College submitted requests for three signs. These include a single-sided sign on Wesley Circle behind the current dining hall, a double-sided sign on Wesley Street at Wesley Circle pointing toward the current dining hall and a double-sided sign on Wesley in front of the current dining hall. The Planning Commission had reviewed the requests in advance based on the written submittal from the College.

Upon motion of Mr. Manson, seconded by Ms. England, all three signs were approved as requested. All members voted in favor.

OXFORD COLLEGE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENTS: Oxford College requests the approval of several amendments to the future development plan. Mr. Ready noted that this request was discussed on a preliminary basis during the Planning Commission meeting on November 11th. The proposed amendments are:

4a Existing and Proposed Land Use

4. Proposed Future Campus Life Center
5. Proposed Future Campus Life Addition of approximately 10,000 square feet.
31. Proposed Dining Hall approximately 20,600 square feet.

4c. Existing and proposed vehicular circulation patterns, including deliveries

1. West Moore Street will be the primary Campus entrance for delivery traffic. The delivery traffic will then turn right onto the service road to the west of Campus.
2. Pierce Street will be the primary Campus entrance for vehicular traffic.
3. Pierce Street will be the entrance for new dining delivery vehicles only.

4d. Existing and proposed pedestrian circulation patterns

1. Proposed Hamill Street closure to vehicular traffic to become a pedestrian corridor with a pedestrian cross walk to the east across Highway 81.

2. Pedestrian traffic will approach new dining facility crossing Pierce Street at Asbury Street and Wesley Street and will cross Wesley Street at Pierce Street.

Mr. Johnson reviewed the changes in the list of amendments. The big changes are the addition of a new dining hall and the closing of Hamill Street. Ms. Mayfield discussed the other changes. Mr. Manson asked whether there was any timetable for the closing of Hamill and what would be the treatment of the closed street; that is, what would it look like? Ms. Mayfield said that the college was planning to propose a project to close Hamill and would be more specific at a later date. After further discussion, Mr. Ready recommended that the College take the closing of Hamill Street out of this list of amendments. We could return to that issue in a later time. The representatives of Oxford College agreed to that request.

Upon motion of Mr. Manson, seconded by Mr. Eady the list of proposed amendments to the future development plan were approved for recommendation to City Council, with the exception of 4d 1., which refers to Hamill Street. All members voted in favor.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Ready reminded everyone that we are required to have an organizational meeting in January. He then wished everyone “Happy Holidays” and adjourned the meeting at 8:31 PM.

Submitted by:

Bob Schwartz, zoning administrator and city manager