

## **HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HAPC)**

### **Meeting Minutes** **September 9, 2020**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

The September 9, 2020 virtual meeting of the Oxford Historic and Architectural Preservation Commission was called to order at 6:15 p.m. by Chris Skoglund.

Members present: Chris Skoglund, Edna Southard, Corey Watt, Dana Miller, Hueston Kyger, Sean Wagner and Chad Smith were excused. Staff present was Sam Perry, Director. Ben Mazer, City Attorney, was also present.

This meeting was being conducted virtually using Zoom and Youtube in accordance with House Bill 197.

Ms. Southard made motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Watt seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Ms. Southard made motion to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Watt seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Perry stated there was no one present wishing to speak during public comment.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **HAPC-2020-12, 101 W. Church, demolition and construction of a four story structure in the UP District**

Mr. Norman Butt, The Architectural Group, Applicant/Agent was present for the meeting.

Mr. Perry reviewed the staff report contained in the agenda packet on pages 5-52. Mr. Perry reported that the appraisals affirmed that the building designated historic was correct. Mr. Perry clarified that the historic part of the structure was the part damaged in the fire.

Mr. Perry reviewed graphics displaying the existing structure and the 5 additions through the years. Conceptual plans were also displayed. Both drawings provided the HAPC a visual perspective. Mr. Perry reviewed the conceptual elevations.

Ms. Prue Dana and Monet Cavanaugh were present virtually.

Ms. Cavanaugh wished to speak. Mr. Cavanaugh directed her question to the HAPC and asked how they see the destruction and construction of a new structure will affect student life and Oxford residents and if professor housing is an option for this building or just for students or a mix of students/professors? Mr. Skoglund referred her question to Mr. Butt. Mr. Butt referred to a potential housing study and one of the reviews is enhancing the Uptown District to have within walking distance shops and restaurants and directing that development to more professionals. Mr. Perry reported looking at business support year round would be good to have long term residency in the Uptown area. Mr. Skoglund noted that this was more of a planning issue than the HAPC. Mr. Butt referred to Ms. Cavanaugh's first question, that the location of the structure is in a transitional zone and mediates between Uptown and residential area and the design incorporates residential and business use and professional use. Mr. Butt added this would be a great benefit to the community.

Mr. Butt provided his presentation including 3-D images of the project. Mr. Butt noted having paid a lot of attention to the details taking into account the Design Guidelines and historic inventory. Reviewed the condition of the structure before the fire versus after and current housing needs. Mr. Butt displayed drawings showing the sequence of additions to the original structure. Mr. Butt reviewed what transpired after the fire and his discussions with Mr. Dudley. Mr. Butt reviewed the Deardorff Appraisal fair market value analysis included in the packet.

Mr. Skoglund noted there were two parts here for a decision: demolition of the existing structure, and replacement of the structure. Mr. Skoglund noted that he clearly sees that more than a 50% criteria exists for a demolition coupled with the cost of repair, and after recommendations from the Fire Chief, and building officials, felt they had satisfied the demolition criteria.

Ms. Southard inquired if the HAPC could talk about a partial demolition, if possible and could we utilize parts of the original structure. Mr. Butt responded that they did take that into consideration. Difficulties were described with that thought. Aesthetically may do more disservice to it by having multiple 4 story structures surrounding the partial structure. Mr. Butt stated they could incorporate original designs into the new structure. Mr. Butt described what character would be reflected into the new structure. Back to the response from Ms. Southard's question, Mr. Butt concluded that it could be done, but not sure it would be the greatest resolution.

Mr. Watt agreed with Ms. Southard of possibly looking at some other options. Mr. Watt referred to the HAPC having discussed in the past year those transitioning areas near different zoning districts. Mr. Watt inquired if they had entertained the idea of a shorter structure and not maintaining the entire site. Mr. Butt-responded absolutely.

Mr. Skoglund inquired to more of the three dimensional rendering discussion. Mr. Butt described the parking design and developable space. Mr. Butt shared that all guidelines were reviewed before designing the building. Mr. Butt described how in developing the footprint they wanted to soften the look of a one large structure. Looked at the size and scale of the building appropriateness at the location. Mr. Butt displayed and discussed those existing Uptown structures which have large facades. Mr. Butt discussed how they came to this design, by introducing different materials and colors, creating stepbacks and projections, creative design components of space, softening the building to create a visual separation in the design, visual separation of commercial and residential uses. Mr. Skoglund inquired about the balconies and if tables/chairs would fit. Mr. Butt stated no. Mr. Skoglund described surrounding properties located in a transitional area and this building just being such a massive structure. Mr. Butt stated they adapted designs to mirror existing neighboring structures.

Ms. Southard referred to the historical nature of the structure and preserving its historic character as she doesn't see it being preserved. Ms. Southard felt that the scale didn't reflect the existing structure. Mr. Butt responded they went off the 22 design guidelines and applied them to this building.

Mr. Miller weighed in and felt that the new structure fit in with the rest of the street. Mr. Miller felt there was great effort done to fit the architectural elements of neighboring structures, but the new structure just overwhelms the street.

Mr. Watt stated that he liked the proposed building but getting stuck on what's there and what the City will lose. Mr. Watt stated that he loved the design, but for that spot it is really big, and just still stuck on what we are losing. Mr. Watt stated that he loved the architectural design, just concerned with the size, location and what we are losing historically. Mr. Butt responded maybe it is the first of its kind. Maybe it is time for this type of building as it represents the full design guidelines and could be a statement in the community

Mr. Kyger commented that it would be sad to lose the older building, could it be saved and incorporated into the new design. Mr. Kyger agreed the proposed building is very large but prettier and better design elements than those 4 story structures already built. Mr. Kyger noted that he had expected it would be a large project.

Mr. Skoglund summarized everyone's comments, agreeing that the look and appearance looked attractive, and commended Mr. Butt having gone out of his way to incorporate all of the design guidelines. However, in regards to the overall size and the magnitude of this structure particularly on Church Street it was agreed to be of concern. Mr. Skoglund inquired Mr. Butt if there was any consideration to lowering the structure; eliminating one floor so it wouldn't look so large in relation to others buildings on Church Street. Mr. Watt referred to reducing the gables/roofline, maybe with separate and distinct structures. Discussion followed. The HAPC discussed the roof and agreed that the size and magnitude of the structure was out of scope for the neighborhood.

Mr. Perry recommended since couldn't mandate the height per the Law Director, should we ask for a legal opinion, and carry over to the next meeting. Mr. Perry continued maybe going back to the Planning Commission to create language for heights of structures. Mr. Skoglund responded that in determining compatibility, specifically scale, this is what was hanging in the back of his mind.

Ms. Southard referred to proposed parking and not seeing bike racks, would walking and other modes of transportation be part of the design. Discussion followed. Mr. Watt inquired if parking was for the property only or City. Mr. Butt responded property; that the street parking side would be public.

Ms. Prue Dana, 131 W Collins Street, was present virtually and wished to speak. Ms. Dana described her point of view in saving the building versus a chance to start in a new direction. Ms. Dana felt this building would do that. Ms. Dana stated she was glad mostly that the design incorporated lowering the roof from 4 to 3 stories.

It was determined to make two motions and vote on two items:

Mr. Kyger made motion to approve the demolition of 101 W Church Street. Mr. Miller seconded the motion.

AYE: Kyger, Southard, Skoglund (3)

NAY: Miller, Watt (2)

ABS: None

Mr. Skoglund announced the 3-2 motion carries to approve the demolition.

In regards to the planned new structure:

Mr. Perry recommended voting on mass scale and concept with the conditions for further detail of the materials. Mr. Perry stated the HAPC could table as well. Mr. Perry suggested receiving more information on materials; however, the HAPC has to take some action on the design since the demolition has been approved. Discussion followed.

Mr. Kyger made motion to Table for better drawing details of the new structure at the HAPC October meeting. Ms. Southard seconded the motion.

AYE: Watt, Miller, Southard, Kyger, Skoglund (5)

NAY: None

ABS: None

Mr. Butt thanked everyone. Mr. Skoglund, thanked Mr. Butt for his level of detail.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Watt made motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kyger seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.