

OXFORD PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes – April 8, 2014

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

STAFF: Bob Schwartz, city manager and zoning administrator.

GUESTS: Charles Rossignol, Margaret Dugan, and Kendra Mayfield, Oxford College; and Wayne Bruce with Verizon Wireless.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Upon motion of Mr. Manson, seconded by Mr. Eady, the minutes for the meeting of March 11 were approved.

Oxford College-dining Hall exit stairs: Oxford College has submitted a development permit application for modifications to the rear exit stairs at the dining hall. Charles Rossignol was present to discuss this with the Planning Commission. He noted that the bridge to the Branham and East dormitory is the exit to the dining hall. When Branham and East is demolished they will remove the stairs and then there will be no landing for the exit. The plans are to rebuild the exit adding guardrails and a sufficient landing. The changes have been approved by the state fire marshal's office. The Planning Commission members reviewed the plans and discussed the project with Mr. Rossignol.

Upon motion of Mr. Eady seconded by Ms. Gaither, the development permit was approved.

Oxford College-modular building: Oxford College submitted an application for a development permit for the location of a third modular building at 801 Asbury. Margaret Dugan discussed this third modular building with the Planning Commission. Mr. Eady asked when the three modular buildings would be removed from the site. Ms. Dugan stated that the goal is that once the science building is complete, the need for the modular buildings will go away, and therefore the modular buildings will be removed. This is likely to happen by the spring of 2016. The Planning Commission asked about landscaping plans. It will be possible to locate the building without removing any trees. There will be some minimal landscaping around the new building. It will be set on temporary piers. Mr. Eady asked about the electrical service. Mr. Schwartz noted that Jody Reid, the city superintendent, has already been in touch with the college about supplying sufficient electricity for the new building. This will not present a problem to the city electric department. After further discussion it was determined that a good deadline for removing the buildings would be June 30, 2016.

Upon motion of Mr. Eady, seconded by Mr. Manson, the development permit was approved with the condition that the modular building will be removed by June 30, 2016 and that all utilities will be approved through the Newton County Building Inspection Department.

Verizon cell phone tower: Verizon Wireless submitted an application for a development permit approval for construction of an antenna and an accessory building at the city's water tower. Wayne Bruce was present representing Verizon Wireless. He discussed the construction plans with the Planning Commission. He noted that they would build a 12 foot by 26 foot concrete pad on the back of the property and would locate a prefabricated concrete shelter of 11.5' x 25.5' on the pad. Mr. Eady asked whether or not this was going to result in exclusive use of this tower by Verizon Wireless. Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Bruce reported that the contract between the city and Verizon Wireless was "nonexclusive". Mr. Eady cautioned that the easements should be reviewed before being approved so that any additional wireless provider would have physical access to the property.

Mr. Manson noted that he used to be in the telephone business some time before cell phones had become so popular. He had read recently that AT&T was experimenting with two small cities to convert them completely from land lines to cell phones. Therefore, it was to the city's advantage to locate multiple carriers on the water tower.

Upon motion of Mr. Eady, seconded by Ms. Gaither, the development permit was approved with a caveat to the city manager to be aware of the easements when they are negotiated so that access for additional providers would be preserved.

ADJOURNMENT: After a motion by Mr. Manson, seconded by Mr. Eady, Mr. Ready adjourned the meeting at 7:50 PM.

Submitted by:

Bob Schwartz, Zoning Administrator