

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF GRANVILLE  
CITY OF OXFORD**

**2020 ANNUAL REPORT of the  
OXFORD  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
COMMISSION**

TO: Mayor Jackie Sergent and the Oxford Board of Commissioners

On behalf of the Oxford Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), I present this Annual Report to update you on the activities of the HPC from May 2019 through April 2020, and to share the goals of the coming year.

The Commission presently has no vacancies and consists of the following seven (7) members:

Derreck Brown, Chairman	Anthony F. (Tony) Armento, Vice-Chairman
Kelly Collins-Schram, Treasurer	Lisa Schons, Secretary and Webmaster
Michael Delionbach, member	David Quinn, member
Jacalyn Thomas, member	

Treasury report: \$1,409.00 operating funds

**N.C.G.S. § 160A-400.1. Legislative findings.**

The historical heritage of our State is one of our most valued and important assets. The conservation and preservation of historic districts and landmarks stabilize and increase property values in their areas and strengthen the overall economy of the State. This Part authorizes cities and counties of the State within their respective zoning jurisdictions and by means of listing, regulation, and acquisition: (1) To safeguard the heritage of the city or county by preserving any district or landmark therein that embodies important elements of its culture, history, architectural history, or prehistory; and (2) To promote the use and conservation of such district or landmark for the education, pleasure and enrichment of the residents of the city or county and the State as a whole. (1989, c. 706, s. 2.)

In accordance with the legislation enabling the creation of historic preservation commissions by municipal governments, the purposes of the Oxford Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) are:

- To safeguard the heritage of the City of Oxford by preserving districts and landmarks therein that embody important elements of its cultural, social, economic, political or architectural history and which possesses integrity of design, setting, materials, feelings and association;
- To promote the use and conservation of such districts and landmarks for the education, pleasure and enrichment of the residents of Oxford and of the state as a whole.

In addition, preservation efforts should help:

- Foster civic beauty;
- Stabilize property values;
- Strengthen the local economy;
- Encourage the restoration, preservation, rehabilitation, and conservation of historically, architecturally, and archaeologically significant areas, structures, buildings, sites or objects and their surroundings; and

**2020 ANNUAL REPORT of the OXFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
(Continued)**

- Protect such buildings, sites, or objects and their surroundings from potentially adverse influences that may cause the decline, decay or destruction of important historical, architectural, and archaeological features that are a part of the local heritage.

These core purposes were served through the following activities of the HPC during the period May 2019 – April 2020:

- The HPC received 31 Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications (16 in prior year; an increase of 93.8%) affecting 26 properties and consisting of 53 separate projects (29 in prior year; an increase of 45.3%). Of the 53 project applications reviewed:
  - 2 were approved administratively as Minor Works (3.7%);
  - 52 were formally reviewed (96.3%); of these, 50 were approved (96.2%) and 2 denied.
- Two (2) HPC members attended 6-hour training sessions, sponsored by the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Participation in SHPO training is required for the HPC to maintain its Certified Local Government (CLG) designation, awarded to Oxford by the SHPO in September 2014 for standards of performance achieved by the HPC. Topics covered in the training sessions included legal basics for local government preservation programs, ethical standards for local preservation commission members, and review of North Carolina Historic Preservation Tax Credits and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- The project to update the architectural survey of the Oxford Historic District (OHD) listing in the National Register of Historic Places was completed. The project was funded in part by the award in July 2017 of \$10,800 by the national Historic Preservation Fund. The HPC was previously advised by the SHPO of the importance of Oxford undertaking such a project, as 30 years had passed since the OHD Register nomination was originally approved, and because a CLG has the responsibility to keep its Register inventory current. The project was concluded by submission of the updated survey to the North Carolina National Register Advisory Committee, which approved the HPC project consultant's recommendations of at its October meeting. Final survey results include:
  - 23 of the 33 buildings currently listed in the National Register as non-contributing structures were reclassified as contributing structures, making future qualified rehabilitation expenses of these buildings eligible for tax credit;
  - 246 additional contributing resources in 12 expansion areas on the perimeter of the original OHD have been added in the expanded OHD;
  - 6 additional districts and 5 individual buildings were approved for application to the National Park Service for National Register designation at any time in the future that the City of Oxford would like to do so.

**2020 ANNUAL REPORT of the OXFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
(Continued)**

- The HPC also submitted a 2020 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) Pass-Through Grant Application Form in May 2020 to list in the National Register of Historic Places the Oxford National Guard Armory and the Williamsboro-Military Streets Historic District. The proposed W-MSHD would include approximately 40 structures circa 1850-1950 located in the 300-500 blocks of Williamsboro Street and the 100 block of Military Street. We have requested a grant of \$9,450 with local matching funds (already approved) in the amount of \$6,300.00.
- With the approval of the Board of Commissioners and the support of a private donor, the HPC engaged hmwPreservation to prepare the application to the National Park Service for the Oxford Historic District National Register Nomination Additional Documentation and Boundary Increase. This phase of the project was commenced in December and the application to the National Park Service was completed and presented to the SHPO for review and approval in March. Because the application has reached this status, owners of contributing structures within the expanded district may immediately apply for tax credit for eligible projects.
- The 8th Annual HPC Stewardship Award, for the preservation activities at 109 Rectory Street, was presented in May 2019.
- The 8th Annual HPC Photo Contest was conducted throughout the summer of 2019. Contest categories included: Nature/Wildlife, Porches, Nighttime, and Photographer's Choice. The awards were funded in part by contributions from Granville Health System, Highland Dentistry, Tony Woodlief, and the generous support of a private donor whose contribution also allowed the HPC to present the awards at a reception event held at The Hub on Main in October. Additionally, in partnership with the Downtown Oxford Economic Development Corporation, all winning photos were displayed in downtown storefronts throughout the recent winter months.
- On November 15<sup>th</sup>, the HPC hosted a Community Education Session at the Richard Thornton Library. Commission members and residents of neighboring areas were invited to attend, and several representatives from Warren County were in attendance. Mr. Daniel L. Becker, founder of Heritage Arts of NC presented. The program, entitled "Crowdsourcing Community Investment Through Preservation: A Personal Contribution," explored how historic preservation districts strengthen local economic development, benefiting individual property owners as well as the broader community's economic fortunes. Evaluation responses indicated high satisfaction, with each metric scoring at 4 or above on a scale of zero to five.
- Aware of the increasing popularity of historic tourism and its benefits to downtown merchants, the HPC has partnered with the Downtown Oxford Economic Development Corporation to reboot the Historic District Walking Tours. Originally created as a self-guided tour, guided/narrated tours were also developed in 2016 as part of the City's Bicentennial celebration events. Current planning is to re-introduce the self-guided tours, facilitated by a smartphone app, to conduct guided tours semi-annually, and develop holiday and garden tours in the future. A funding application to the Granville County Tourism Development Authority for foundational support of the programs was submitted in April

## **2020 ANNUAL REPORT of the OXFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (Continued)**

and was approved. We were unable to use any of the funding due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but we did resubmit the application again for 2020-2021.

- In furtherance of its objective to engage with other activities in the civic life of the City, the HPC again participated in the Lighting of the Green's event in December. HPC members and other volunteers prepared home-baked cookies to be handed out at the event and held a drawing for a red velvet holiday cake. Planning is underway for an expanded and heightened educational focus for the 2020 event.
- The HPC's "This Old House...Oxford" column was continued, enhancing the community's familiarity with the HPC and its activities. The column appears in the Oxford Public Ledger as a compliment to the HPC's occasional press releases.
- The Oxford HPC Welcome Program was continued. HPC member Kelly Collins-Schram visited new residents to the Oxford Historic Districts during the last year, to welcome them to Oxford and inform them of the resources that are available to answer questions they may have about changes or improvements to their property. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this program has not been performed since March 2020. We will continue to do this important program when the pandemic mitigates and allows the ability to continue doing this.
- An Historic District database continues to be developed. The database is a contact list of Historic District residents that will allow the HPC to communicate electronically with property owners in order to share relevant information and to announce events of interest to them.
- HPC officers were elected, and goals for the coming year were set, in January 2020. All members formally recommitted themselves to the HPC Code of Ethics, sections of which are read aloud at each regular meeting.

### HPC Goals for the coming year currently include:

- Conducting the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual HPC Photo Contest, with contest entries again to be accepted throughout the summer. The contest will conclude again with a reception event in October where the winners will be announced, and the winning photos displayed. The reception event will only occur if it is appropriate and safe based on Covid-19;
- Addition of an online inventory of historic district properties, including photos and descriptions, and a "property of the month" feature, on the HPC website
- Hosting a Community Education Session, open also to residents of neighboring historic districts;
- Continuing:
  - Welcome Program introductions to new residents
  - Periodic "This Old House... Oxford" columns in the Oxford Public Ledger;
  - Participation in the Lighting of the Greens event;
- Implementing the self-guided and guided walking tour programs (if it is appropriate and safe based on Covid-19);

**2020 ANNUAL REPORT of the OXFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
(Continued)**

- Completing the National Register District expansion by acceptance of the boundary adjustments by the National Park Service in the Fall of 2020;
- Awarding the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual HPC Stewardship Award, before the end of 2020.

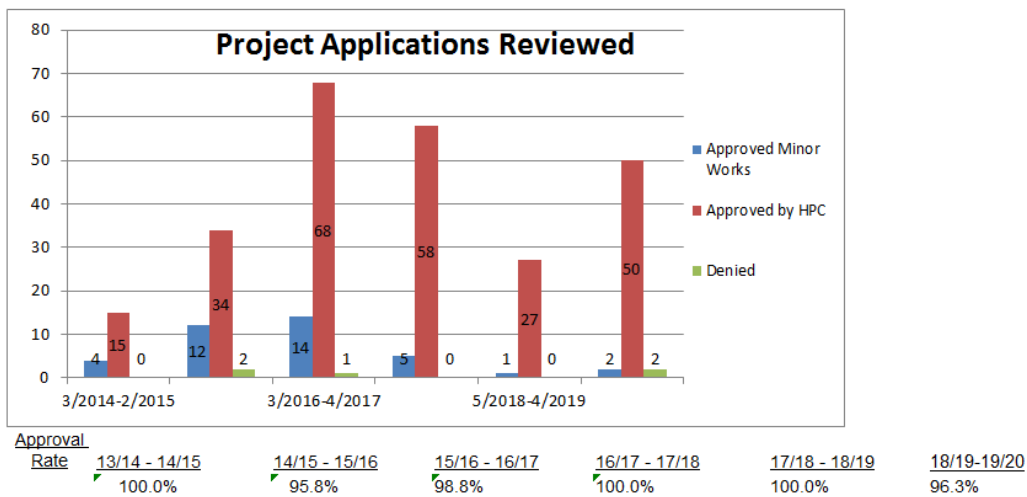
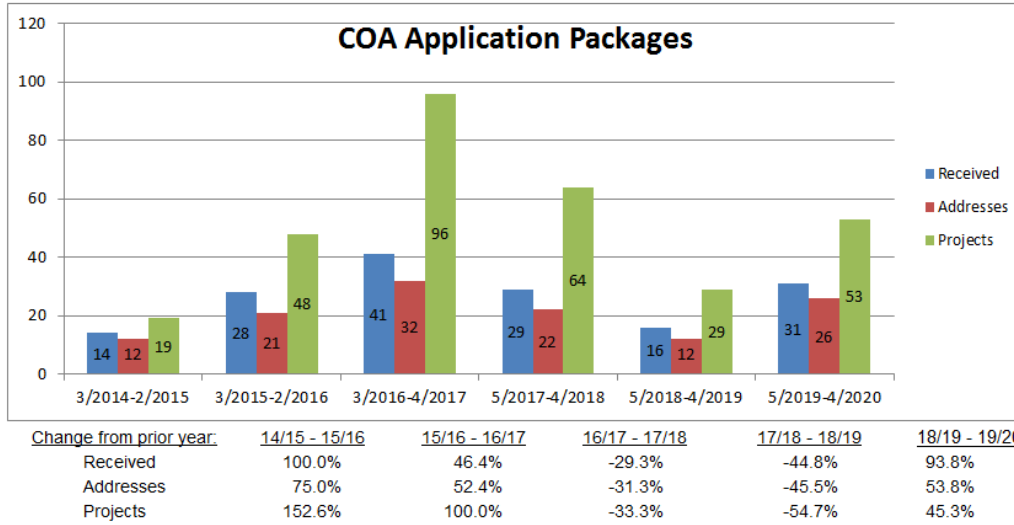
In closing, on behalf of the members of the HPC I extend our gratitude to the Mayor and to the Commissioners, and to City Manager Alan Thornton and Planning Director Cheryl Hart, for your ongoing support in the preservation of the City's historic structures.

This the 17<sup>th</sup> day of August 2020.

Derreck Brown, Chairman  
Oxford Historic Preservation Commission



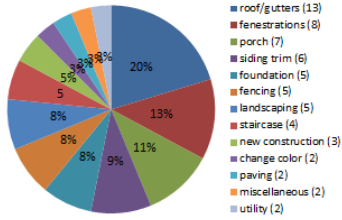
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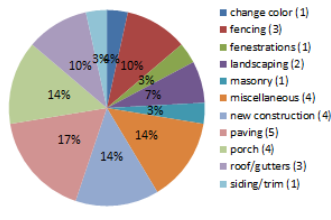


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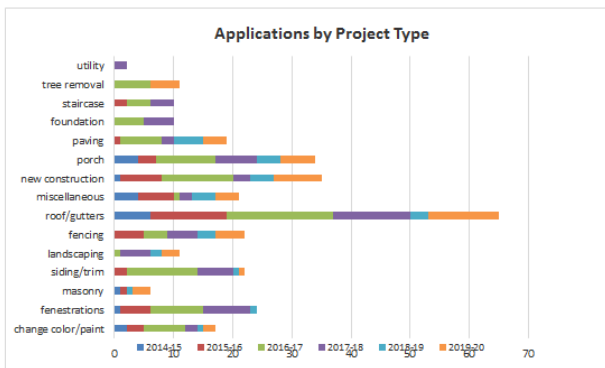
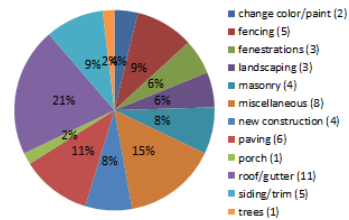
2017-2018 Projects



2018-2019 Projects



2019-2020 Projects



Project Type	2016-2017 Projects
roof/gutters (18)	18 19%
new construction (12)	12 13%
siding trim (12)	12 13%
porch (10)	10 10%
fenestrations (9)	9 9%
change color (7)	7 7%
paving (7)	7 7%
tree removal (6)	6 6%
foundation (5)	5 5%
fencing (4)	4 4%
staircase (4)	4 4%
landscaping (1)	1 1%
miscellaneous (1)	1 1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>

Project Type	2017-2018 Projects
roof/gutters (13)	13 20%
fenestrations (8)	8 13%
porch (7)	7 11%
siding trim (6)	6 9%
foundation (5)	5 8%
fencing (5)	5 8%
staircase (4)	4 6%
landscaping (5)	5 8%
change color (2)	2 3%
paving (2)	2 3%
miscellaneous (2)	2 3%
utility (2)	2 3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>

Project Type	2018-2019 Projects
change color (1)	1 3%
fencing (3)	3 10%
fenestrations (1)	1 3%
landscaping (2)	2 7%
masonry (1)	1 3%
miscellaneous (4)	4 14%
new construction (4)	4 14%
paving (5)	5 17%
porch (4)	4 14%
roof/gutters (3)	3 10%
siding/trim (1)	1 3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>

Project Type	2019-2020 Projects
change color/paint (2)	2 4%
fencing (5)	5 9%
fenestrations (3)	3 6%
landscaping (3)	3 6%
masonry (4)	4 8%
miscellaneous (8)	8 15%
new construction (4)	4 8%
paving (5)	5 11%
porch (1)	1 2%
roof/gutter (11)	11 21%
siding/trim (5)	5 9%
trees (1)	1 2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>