



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Darrell Windsor (Chair), Katie Riley (Vice Chair), Stacy Mudry, Wendy Alderson, Robin Sherman (left at 8:45 p.m.), Thor Christianson (Assembly Liaison)
Staff: Amy Ainslie, Kim Davis, Ariadne Will
Public: Taylor Vieira, Cliff Richter, Lucas Goddard, Beau Hedrick, Sara Peterson, Dennis Peterson, Larry Edwards, Martina Kurzer, Carol Voisin, Kelly Sweeney, Paul Blankenship, Justin Brown, Liza Martin, Cathy Li (Sitka Sentinel)

Chair Windsor called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 25-07](#) Approve the April 2, 2025 meeting minutes.

**M/Mudry-S/Alderson moved to approve the April 2, 2025 meeting minutes.
Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.**

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie informed the commission that in response to feedback from the public, mail buffers would be sent two weeks prior to a Planning Commission meetings, rather than 12 days in advance. She said the city was also updating an email service to help communicate public notices.

She said too that the city was looking to hire part-time workers for the summer season and that staff was continuing to work on information for discussion relating to cruise tourism, but that it was focusing time on the upcoming tourist season and the short-term rental report. She said staff was also looking into code changes regarding telecommunications infrastructure.

VI. REPORTS

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

B [VAR 25-01](#) Review and adoption of findings of fact related to the Planning Commission's denial of a zoning variance request at 112 and 116 Nancy Court under case

file VAR 25-01 on April 2, 2025.

Ainslie provided the commission with an overview of proposed findings to accompany the April 2 vote to deny the variance request to exceed the maximum allowable height of principal structures at 112 and 114 Nancy Court. Following an initial motion that was vacated prior to a vote, Commissioner Sherman said that she wanted to amend the findings to state that the commission did not by consensus find that "the granting of such a variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property, nearby parcels or public infrastructure."

M/Sherman-S/Alderson moved to adopt the findings as submitted and amended in the April 16, 2025 meeting packet and affirmed that the date of adoption for those findings constituted the date of the Planning Commission's final decision on VAR 25-01. Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.

C [P 25- 03](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a conceptual plat for a planned unit development to result in 53 lots at 600 Yaw Drive in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district. The property is also known as Lot 5B, Department of Public Safety Subdivision. The request is filed by Lucas Goddard for Baranof Island Housing Authority. The owner of record is Baranof Island Housing Authority.

Ainslie introduced a conceptual plat for a planned unit development to result in 53 lots at 600 Yaw Drive. The property was about 11 acres and owned by Baranof Island Housing Authority (BIHA), which was seeking some alleviations from development standards by pursuing a PUD. Ainslie provided an overview of proposed utilities, drainage, electric, and access, which included a potential Cross Trail realignment. She said 33 of the proposed lots were under 6,000 square feet, which was to allow for more use of buildable land. Ainslie suggested the commission consider setbacks and how to treat lots with two fronts. She also brought up treatment of trash and reminded the commission that nothing needed to be decided that night, as the plat was conceptual and would return as a preliminary plat at a later date. She said the plat may be finalized in phases.

Following the staff report, the commission asked whether BIHA would be required to include a play area. Ainslie said that a play yard or park was not required.

Cliff Richter and Lucas Goddard, who spoke on behalf of BIHA, said they would consider a park in the development but noted that parks hadn't worked out in the past, and had become dilapidated, which led to vacation of the parks. The applicants said that the development was in partnership between BIHA and Sitka Tribe of Alaska, and that BIHA planned to develop some lots specifically for STA tribal citizens while keeping and selling others. The applicants said they were still working on trash handling measures. The commission suggested creating central, secure locations for depositing garbage.

Neighbors Beau Hedrick, Sara Peterson, and Larry Edwards spoke under public comment. All said they were supportive of housing initiatives but had concerns. Concerns included bear issues in the neighborhood, increased density and impacts on traffic and utilities, and skepticism regarding development follow-through.

Richter and Goddard spoke again following public comment and said development would not begin until BIHA had a good understanding of what could be built with available funding.

During commission discussion, the panel asked about snow removal and said it was

conceptually in support of the proposal. The commission said it would review setbacks, building coverage, parking requirements, and phasing at a later stage.

M/Alderson-S/Sherman moved to approve the conceptual plat for a planned unit development to result in 53 lots at 600 Yaw Drive in the R-2 MHP multifamily residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 5B, Department of Public Safety Subdivision. The request was filed by Lucas Goddard for Baranof Island Housing Authority. The owner of record was Baranof Island Housing Authority. Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.

M/Alderson-S/Riley moved to adopt the findings as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.

D [P 25- 04](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a preliminary plat for a minor subdivision to result in three lots at NHN Ring Island in the GI general island district. The property is also known as Tract A, U.S. Survey 3480, embracing Ring Island in Sitka Harbor. The request is filed by Justin Brown. The owners of record are Paul Blankenship and Justin Brown.

Davis introduced a preliminary plat for a minor subdivision to result in three lots at Ring Island. Ring Island was previously unsubdivided. The proposed lots were 3.28, 2.17, and 1.34 acres. A water line ran from Eagle Way to the island, which was also served by city power, these utilities would be in easements and would be noted on the final plat. Davis noted the applicant was working with DEC to install an up-to-date septic system.

Property owners Justin Brown and Paul Blankenship said that there was not currently a dock to serve the third of the proposed lots. The commission asked about the inclusion of an access easement. Staff said an access easement would be labeled on the plat to serve Lot 3.

No public comment was received.

The commission said during discussion that it supported the subdivision, so long as access was ensured for all three lots.

M/Riley-S/Mudry moved to approve the preliminary plat for a minor subdivision to result in three lots at NHN Ring Island in the GI general island district. The property was also known as Tract A, U.S. Survey 3480, embracing Ring Island in Sitka Harbor. The request was filed by Justin Brown. The owners of record were Paul Blankenship and Justin Brown. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M/Riley-S/Mudry moved to adopt the findings as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

E [ZA 25-02](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a zoning text amendment to allow for onsite marijuana consumption facilities. The applicants are Elizabeth and Marty Martin.

Ainslie introduced a zoning text amendment to allow for onsite marijuana consumption facilities. The proposed amendment added "onsite marijuana consumption facility" as a definition in SGC, allowed the practice as a conditional use in CBD, C-1, WD, I, GI, LI, and GP zoning districts, and changed verbiage to allow for public marijuana consumption if consumed in a regulated onsite facility. Ainslie noted that the facilities would be subject to regulation by the state in addition to permit requirements at the

city level.

Applicant Liza Martin said a legal place for smoking was needed, and that further application were to appear before the commission following the code change.

No public comment was received.

During discussion, the commission noted a stipulation that onsite marijuana consumption facilities were only allowed in freestanding buildings. Staff said that the requirement was at the state level and that the language would not be included in the SGC for that reason.

M/Mudry-S/Alderson moved to recommend approval of the zoning text amendment to add and regulate onsite marijuana consumption facilities in the Sitka General Code. The request was filed by Marty and Elizabeth Martin. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Windsor adjourned the meeting at 9:38 p.m.