


City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street • Sitka, Alaska 99835

Memorandum

TO: Jim Dinley, Municipal Administrator
Mayor and Members of the Assembly

FROM: Wells Williams, Planning Director 

SUBJECT: Two Conditional Use (CU) Requests for the Sitka Summer Music Festival
Sheldon Jackson College Campus – Stevenson Hall
CU for Professional Offices on the First Floor
CU for Housing for Festival Musicians/Guest Workers on the Second Floor

DATE: October 14, 2010

The Sitka Planning Commission is recommending approval of two conditional use permit requests for the Sitka Summer Music Festival for Stevenson Hall on the Sheldon Jackson campus. The board's two recommendations were made on October 5th, 2010. The votes on the proposals were unanimous.

While the two requests are individual items on the October 26th Assembly agenda, they address the same structure. This memorandum covers both issues since the parking arrangement was the only substantive matter and on each proposal.

Stevenson Hall is located on Lot 3-2 Sheldon Jackson Campus Subdivision Number 2. A recent subdivision created an individual parcel for the Armstrong building (located at the corner of Jeff Davis and Lincoln Street) and Stevenson Hall. There is a parking lot on the Armstrong building parcel. There is one half of a parking lot on the Stevenson Hall property along the driveway that serves Hames PE Center.

The 2004 Sheldon Campus Preservation Plan indicates that the two floor Stevenson Hall has historically been used for offices and housing. Since there are not conditional use permits for those uses (which are conditional uses in the R-2 zone), the Music Festival is going through the formal process to obtain them.

The interior of Stevenson Hall is going to be modified by the new owners. There are no plans to alter the historic exterior of the building. A series of subdivision plat notes are in place that provide historical guidelines for the outside of the building. Those plat notes were approved with the input of the Historic Preservation Commission.

The sole issue that surfaced on the requests was the provision of off street parking. While the requirement for compliance with off street parking regulations only deals with building expansions, parking in the area was, nonetheless, an issue.

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In a nutshell, there is adequate parking in the area to meet the needs of private and institutional uses. The original concept of the Sheldon Campus Subdivision was that the lots containing the buildings on core campus, the Sheldon Jackson Day Care, and the Hames PE Center would share the parking lots. This arrangement was memorialized in plat notes and in a recorded Shared Parking Agreement.

The reality is that if the current parking somehow proves to be inadequate, additional parking can easily be created without impacting the appearance of the campus. Property is available that contains marginal vegetation and that property can be used for parking in close proximity to the primary buildings.

The Music Festival has, nevertheless, worked with Sheldon Jackson College and the owner of Tillie Paul (across the street) to further solidify the parking arrangements. The Planning Office has been informed that all parties are satisfied with the final outcome.

The Planning Commission felt comfortable with the ability of properties to accommodate current parking demands. They were also satisfied that this parking was very close to Stevenson Hall. The Board thoroughly reviewed the parking availability with Planning staff using imagery and plats on October 5th.

The Planning Commission further made findings in support of the recommendations for approval.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve the two conditional use requests for the Sitka Summer Music Festival as recommended by the Planning Commission.