



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, April 15, 2026

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Darrell Windsor (Chair), Robin Sherman (Vice Chair), Margaret Frank, Jacquie Foss, Katie Riley (Assembly Liaison)

Absent: Wendy Alderson (Excused)

Staff: Amy Ainslie (via Zoom), Kim Davis, Ariadne Will

Public: Barth Hamberg, Garry White, Casey Finn, Iris Segal, April Candilora, Bill Grant, Carol Voisin, Kelly Sweeney, Robert Krehbiel, Alysha Guthrie, Ben Kraft, Shannon Haugland (Sitka Sentinel)

Chair Windsor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 26-06](#) Approve the April 1, 2026 meeting minutes.

**M-Frank/S-Sherman moved to approve the April 1, 2026 meeting minutes.
Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.**

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie and Davis said that CUP 26-04 for a food truck had been pulled as the property owner was considering submitting a permit for a food truck court at the property. Ainslie was to communicate with commissioners the following week to schedule a joint work session between the Tourism Commission and the Planning Commission regarding the dock code ordinance, and staff was to begin work on cell tower code changes soon. Ainslie said the Historic Preservation Plan had been passed by the Assembly the previous evening.

VI. REPORTS

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

B [P 25- 09](#) Public hearing and consideration of a plat for a lot merger of 338 and 344 Katlian Avenue in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district. The property is also known as Lots 43 and 44, Block 1, U.S. Survey 2542 A&B, Sitka Indian Village. The request is filed by Bill Grant. The owner of record is

North Pacific Seafoods, Inc.

Davis reviewed a request for a lot merger at 344 and 338 Katlian Avenue filed by North Pacific Seafoods, Inc. The two small lots were to result in one 4,261 square-foot lot, which was still substandard for the zone. The applicant had originally planned to place a multifamily unit on the lot but had since pulled that permit. Davis explained that the lot merger would bring the two legal nonconforming lots closer to conformance with the R-1 zone, and said it would reduce density potential for the lots, which as stood could each be developed with a duplex.

Bill Grant, speaking on behalf of the applicant, said NPSI had previously planned to construct employee housing on the property but had decided to take that project in a different direction. He said given the engineering and survey work already conducted, the company was completing the lot merger without further development plans.

No public comment was received. One comment from Sitka Tribe of Alaska was included in packet materials and requested the commission to consider impacts future development of the merged lots would have on neighboring properties.

During deliberation, the commission asked staff to provide guidance regarding what the commission should consider. Davis explained some of the features of subdivisions reviewed by staff prior to commission review and Ainslie explained how the lot merger would decrease density at the property.

M-Foss/S-Sherman moved to approve the final plat for a lot merger at 338 and 344 Katlian Avenue in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lots 43 and 44, Block One (1), U.S. Survey 2542 A and B, Sitka Indian Village. The request was filed by Bill Grant. The owner or record was North Pacific Seafoods, Inc. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

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

C [VAR 26-02](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a request for a major variance to increase allowable lot coverage from 35% to 45.6%, reduce a front setback from 20 feet to two feet, and reduce required off-street parking from 20 spaces to zero spaces at 200 Katlian Avenue in the P public lands district. The property is also known as Lot 1A, Replat of Front Street School Subdivision. The request is filed by E David Hurley on behalf of Sitka Tribe of Alaska. The owner of record is Sitka Tribe of Alaska.

Davis introduced a major variance request from Sitka Tribe of Alaska to increase allowable lot coverage from 35% to 45.6%, reduce a front setback from 20 feet to two feet, and reduce required off-street parking from 20 spaces to zero spaces at 200 Katlian Avenue. The request was to accommodate the construction of a carving shed on the property. Davis provided overview of the three components of the variance request and explained that the property--which was zoned public--had likely been believed central business district by past planners, which was what led, especially, to the need for a request to reduce the parking requirement.

Alysha Guthrie of STA and Ben Kraft of Northwind Architects spoke on behalf of the applicant. They said the addition was to use remaining ARPA funding and that it would allow for the accommodation of appropriately large totem poles. Kraft said Northwind

Architects attempted to elongate the carving shed as much as possible. Guthrie said in response to a commission question that the shed was to be used primarily during the summer months, as it was to be unheated.

No public comment was received. During deliberation, the commission asked if public works, fire, and other city entities had been notified of the project. Davis replied that they had and were in communication.

M-Sherman/S-Frank moved to approve the major zoning variances for an increase in lot coverage from 35% to 45.6%, a reduction to the front setback from 20 feet to two feet, and a reduction in parking requirements from 20 parking spaces to zero parking spaces at 200 Katlian Street in the P public lands district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot One-A (1A), Replat of the Front Street School Subdivision. The request was filed by Sitka Tribe of Alaska. The owner of record was Sitka Tribe of Alaska. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M-Sherman/S-Frank moved to adopt and approve the findings for variances involving major structures or expansions as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

D [ZA 26-02](#)

Discussion and review of zoning code changes for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

Ainslie led discussion regarding a proposed change to the ADU code. She first went over some slides regarding the goals for the ADU code change; where ADUs are currently permitted, conditional, and prohibited; and questions regarding expanding circumstances in which ADUs could be permitted outright. Currently, ADUs in zones where permitted outright still had to meet 14 requirements, which Ainslie overviewed next. After reviewing the existing 14 requirements, Ainslie brought up a code section that allowed for three principal uses in commercial and multifamily zones. She asked the commission to weigh in regarding how ADUs would fit within or alongside the three principal uses.

The commission said it recommended codifying the three principal structures statement, which Ainslie had described as a loophole. The commission said it agreed, then, that ADUs would exist only in R-1 and related zones, and would be considered single-family detached units in multifamily and commercial districts.

The commission also discussed the definition of an ADU and how it differed from a duplex. Ainslie stressed that an ADU was separate from a property's principal structure, whereas a duplex was a unit structurally attached to the principal dwelling unit. The commission expressed support for pre-approved ADU designs and for allowing ADUs in Sitka's single-family zoning districts pending further public engagement. Additional public engagement was requested regarding the use of manufactured homes and tiny homes on chassis as ADUs. The commission also requested thought regarding the elimination, where possible, of variances that might be needed when an ADU would already need a conditional use permit. It said it felt comfortable with the short-term rental of ADUs on the condition that the renting be for no more than three years, managed by the owner who constructed the unit, and applied for within a year of the unit's receipt of occupancy. In regard to a requirement for parking, the commission requested the possibility of zone- or neighborhood-specific parking requirements.

Garry White spoke under public comment on behalf of SEDA and said the organization

was working on creating pre-approved ADU designs that were between 360 and 800 square feet. He said the easing of some of the existing requirements would help with the pre-approved plans, many of which violated certain existing requirements. Staff read into the record comments from Barth Hamberg, Alex Polston, and Jonathan and Toccoa Wolf, all of whom lived in the Shotgun Alley neighborhood where ADUs were prohibited by code. All three commenters expressed interest in the permitting of ADUs in the single-family low-density zoning district.

Following public comment, the commission discussed occupancy of ADUs. Commissioners expressed concern with both the use of ADUs by seasonal workers in a manner which would heavily increase density and with use of ADUs solely by visiting family and friends of property owners in a manner that would not increase long-term housing stock.

Riley asked the commission if there were incentive programs it wanted her to investigate. The commission floated the possibilities of fee waivers on pre-approved ADU designs but said it didn't want property owners to have access to both reimbursement and short-term rental of the unit. The commission discussed waiving property tax for ADUs but was somewhat divided on the idea.

No motion made.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Windsor adjourned the meeting at 9:27 p.m.