



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Chris Spivey (Chair), Darrell Windsor, Stacy Mudry, Katie Riley (joined at 7:07 PM), Thor Christianson (Assembly liaison)

Excused: Wendy Alderson

Staff: Amy Ainslie, Coral Crenna, Kim Davis

Public: Jamal Floate, Samantha Matthews (telephonic), Priya Gandhi (telephonic), Ariadne Will (telephonic, Sitka Sentinel)

Chair Spivey called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 23-04](#)

M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to approve the February 15, 2023 minutes. Motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie reported the Tourism Task Force had been approved by the Assembly. The Assembly would be approving the membership at the April 25th meeting. Spivey inquired about meeting times, Ainslie stated the task force would meet prior to the summer season and then resume in the fall. Christianson clarified the number of seats available; downtown business corridor (1 seat), tours and attractions (1 seat), business in general (1 seat), and community at-large (2 seats). Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Port and Harbors Commission, and the Sustainability Commission would each recommend a member for appointment, for a total of nine members.

VI. REPORTS

B [MISC 23-03](#)

Graduate students from Pardee RAND presented a report, 2022 Community Assessment on the Impacts of Increased Tourism in Sitka. They conducted a community survey of 469 people (6.9% of Sitka's population) and did eleven interviews with community leaders. Impacts were reported on housing, recreation, and grocery

stores. There were common threads of increased traffic congestion, overcrowding, pedestrian safety, and telecommunication connection issues. The report highlighted critical issues that policymakers could use to mitigate the negative impacts and maximize the benefits of tourism.

Riley thanked the students for their time and efforts of the study. Spivey asked how the housing and cost of living questions were asked in the survey and if the housing questions were specific to tourism or if it was a general question. The RAND students clarified the survey questions were broad but they tried to make all the questions tourism specific. Christianson asked about independent travelers being included in the survey. RAND stated independent travelers were included and the questions were not specific to cruise ship passengers. Ainslie asked about one of the demographic points, homeowner vs. renter. RAND explained the data could be broken out into those two demographic points. RAND found the respondent data to be skewed towards older, more educated residents and they were more likely to be homeowners. Mudry asked how did they find the participants. RAND stated it was a web based survey. The survey was sent to the Sitka Sound Science Center mailing list, shared with organizations and business, and made announcements on Raven Radio. There was no data collected on how the respondents heard about survey.

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

C [P 23- 01](#)

Ainslie introduced the final plat for a minor subdivision at 206 Cascade Creek Road. The access and utilities to the property was from Cascade Creek Road with frontage along both Edgecumbe Drive and Cascade Creek Road. The proposed Lot 2 would be served via Cascade Creek Road for permanent utilities and temporary access easement. The applicant would develop Lot 2 to have its own independent access via Edgecumbe Drive. Once the driveway was permitted by the Municipal Engineer the temporary access easement would be released via a recorded document. Staff recommended approval.

The applicant Jamal Floate was present. He would be developing the lot and stated it was his intent to build a driveway from Edgecumbe Drive to reduce traffic across his lot. There was no public comment or discussion by commissioners.

M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to approve the final plat for a minor subdivision to result in two lots at 206 Cascade Creek Road in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 1A Collins Resubdivision. The request was filed by Jamal Floate. The owner of record was Jamal Floate. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

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

D [MISC 23-04](#)

Ainslie introduced cluster housing developments for discussion as there had been interest from the community and developers to create multifamily developments as free-standing, single-family dwelling units and not apartment buildings. These dwelling units had been referred to as cottage or cabin homes that would be on a single lot and

not saleable. Historically cluster housing developments had been a platting action as a special type under the subdivision code. The definition did not describe it as platting action and it could fit as a zoning designation. It was possible to apply cluster development as a non-subdivision action on a single lot for multiple, stand-alone, single-family dwelling units.

Ainslie was looking for guidance from the commission if this could be an administration interpretation or if a new amendment should be created in the zoning code.

Commissioners discussed density, development standards, short-term vs. long-term housing, the subdivision process, and possibly creating a zoning amendment to clarify the process. No motion was made by commissioners.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objections, Spivey adjourned the meeting at 8:35 PM.