



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, March 19, 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, Thor Christianson (Assembly Liaison)
Staff: Amy Ainslie, Kim Davis, Ariadne Will
Public: Bijjibaa Garrison, David D'Amato, Jessica Ieremia, Jeff Ieremia, Holley Bayne, Trent Bayne, April Candilora, Bill Grant, Kendall Didrickson, Don Anderson, Becky Anderson, Clayton Stromquist, Tad Kisaka

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

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 25-05](#) Approve the March 5, 2025 meeting minutes.

M/Mudry-S/Riley moved to approve the March 5, 2025 meeting minutes. Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie told the commission that an appeal regarding a subdivision action was to go before the Assembly on March 25, and that packet materials were to be published the 21st.

VI. REPORTS

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

B [CUP 25-04](#) Public hearing and consideration of a request for a conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 327 Cascade Street in the R1 single-family and duplex residential district. The property is also known as Lot 30, Block B, Resurvey of Moore Memorial Addition. The request is filed by David D'Amato. The owner of record is Bijjibaa Garrison.

Ainslie introduced a request for a conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 327 Cascade Street. Commissioner Mudry recused herself, as she was a neighbor and had submitted public comment.

During the staff report, Ainslie said that the 836 square-foot, three-bed, one-bath house was the primary residence of property owner Bijiibaa Garrison. She and David D'Amato requested a six-guest maximum for the property. Ainslie said adequate parking--two spaces--would require the use of the front yard, and said the Planning and Community Development Department had been alerted by the Building Department that the structure did not have a certificate of occupancy at the time of the hearing. Ainslie recommended approval of the item with the added condition that the applicant receive a certificate of occupancy prior to renting the dwelling unit.

Garrison said following the staff report that she worked a little over half-time at SEARHC and traveled between Sitka and Anchorage, primarily. She said she planned to rent the house out short-term when not in town, and clarified that she was a resident of Sitka. Applicant David D'Amato, who identified himself as Garrison's spouse, said that he believed he remained a registered voter in Anchorage but would be spending the same amount of time in the Cascade Street house as Garrison.

The Planning Commission asked D'Amato about parking and the building permit pertaining to the house, as the house was fully redone in the last few years. D'Amato said he received a building permit in 2020 for construction and a deck permit last year. He said that there was a single space in front of the house if renters couldn't park on the street. Staff clarified that two off-street parking spaces were necessary.

Under public comment, neighbors Jessica Ieremia, Holley Bayne, and Stacy Mudry all spoke against the permit request. Neighbors said they believed the applicant and owner were intending to use the property as a rental, only, and did not believe they lived at the residence. They said they believed the applicant was already using the property as a short-term rental. The neighbors also said they noticed trash issues and had concerns with the lack of proposed parking, as well as the lack of buffers at the sides of the property. In her comments, Mudry said that D'Amato didn't have a building permit for the property until after Mudry inquired with the city's Building Official.

Following public comment, D'Amato again spoke and said that he had a building permit by the time the original house was demolished, and that he had an agreement with the neighbors regarding the trash. In response to a question from the commission, D'Amato said that though he had not rented the unit short-term, it was listed on a short-term rental platform as a "test case." He said people who had done work on the house had stayed there at times, as had he and the property owner.

During commission discussion, the panel identified the issues of parking, trash handling, and little to no buffer at the southwest side of the property as reason for concern. They said they were also troubled by the applicant's advertising of the unit without a permit, and reiterated concern regarding the permit request coming to the commission before the issuance of a certificate of occupancy. The panel requested the applicant consider withdrawing or postponing the permit request. Staff said that the item could be postponed until the applicant addressed parking, trash handling, and received a certificate of occupancy.

M/Sherman-S/Riley moved to postpone consideration of CUP 25-04 until a certificate of occupancy was issued for the residence, the applicant completed a parking plan demonstrating space for two code-compliant off-street parking spaces, and the applicant made plans to address issues related to trash management, noise, and visual buffering. The applicant could not list the property for short-term rental until a conditional use permit was approved and would thereby remove any current solicitations for the property. Motion passed

4-0 by voice vote.

C [VAR 25-02](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a variance request reducing the side setback from 9' to 1' at 696 Indian River Road in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district. The property is also known as Lot 3, Indian River Subdivision. The request is filed by Tad and Jill Kisaka. The owners of record are Jill and Tad Kisaka.

Davis introduced a variance request reducing the side setback from 9' to 1' at 696 Indian River Road in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district. Applicant-owners Jill and Tad Kisaka wanted to reduce the setback to facilitate construction of a deck and carport. The deck and carport were to be built off an addition to the main house, which was planned to contain a new dwelling unit as well as a family room for the existing structure.

Clayton Stromquist, who attended to represent the applicant, said he had nothing to add to the information provided in the staff report.

During deliberation, the commission asked if the abutting neighbor had submitted comment to the department. Staff said that the neighbor had called the planning department that afternoon in support of the variance.

No public comment was heard at the meeting.

M/Riley-S/Alderson moved to approve a variance request reducing the side setback from 9' to 1' at 696 Indian River Road in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district. The property was also known as Lot 3, Indian River Subdivision. The request was filed by Tad and Jill Kisaka. The owners of record were Tad and Jill Kisaka. Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.

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

D [CUP 25-05](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a conditional use permit for multifamily housing (six-plex) at 338 and 344 Katlian Street in the R1 single-family and duplex residential district. The properties are also known as Lots 43 and 44, Block 1, U.S. Survey 2542. The request is filed by Bill Grant. The owner of record is North Pacific Seafoods, Inc.

Ainslie presented a staff report for a request for a conditional use permit for a six-unit multifamily structure at 338 and 344 Katlian Street. The applicant proposed the construction of a six-plex to provide four one bed, one bath and two two bed, one bath housing units for North Pacific Seafoods management staff. The proposed six-plex would be constructed on the two lots, which were required to be merged as a condition of approval. Staff noted that even if combined, the property identified for the structure would be substandard for the zone. Staff explained that its interpretation of provisions within Sitka General Code would allow for the construction of a duplex without a conditional use permit, and therefore the net increase in density was to be four additional dwelling units.

Staff suggested that the review of the permit focus on density, and that if granted, the applicant would then be required to provide a binding site plan addressing setbacks, lot coverage, parking, lot ingress and egress, and other elements the commission wished to review.

Applicant Bill Grant, joined by Kendall Didrickson, said that they planned to address parking concerns, and added that the dwelling units would help keep managerial staff in Sitka. The commission requested the applicant get more neighborhood input. Didrickson said that many neighboring lots are currently vacant or owned by North Pacific Seafoods. Grant said the company would respect and consider the impact to neighbors.

Don Anderson spoke during public comment and said that the lots neighboring 338 and 344 were restricted deeds with more than 40 owners, which might create issues with setbacks. He expressed concern with the ability for the property to safely provide parking for six dwelling units. Adam Chinalski wrote a public comment that was read into the record in support of the permit for a six-plex.

During deliberation, the commission said it did not want the units to be used as short-term rentals. A condition of approval was added to reflect this.

M/Mudry-S/Alderson moved to approve the conditional use permit for a six-unit multifamily structure at 338 and 344 Katlian Street in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval as amended. The property was also known as Lots 43 and 44, Block 1, U.S. Survey 2542. The request was filed by Bill Grant. The owner of record was North Pacific Seafoods, Inc. Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.

M/Mudry-S/Alderson moved to adopt and approve the required findings for conditional use permits as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.

E [ZA 25-01](#)

Discussion of zoning code changes for cruise related docks.

The commission decided to continue its review of zoning code changes for cruise-related docks at the following meeting. The panel requested staff prepare a definition for cruise-related docks for the next meeting's discussion.

No motion was made.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Windsor adjourned the meeting at 8:57 p.m.