



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Draft

Planning Commission

Wednesday, December 15, 2021

6:30 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Chris Spivey (Chair), Darrell Windsor, Stacy Mudry, Katie Riley, Thor Christianson (Assembly Liaison)
Absent: Wendy Alderson (Excused)
Staff: Amy Ainslie, Ben Mejia
Public: Mike Venneberg, Tonya Venneberg, Ben Timby, Ariadne Will (Sitka Sentinel)

Chair Spivey called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 21-28](#) Approve the November 17, 2021 meeting minutes.

M-Windsor/S-Mudry moved to approve the November 17, 2021 meeting minutes. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

B [PM 21-29](#) Approve the November 17, 2021 special meeting minutes.

M-Windsor/S-Mudry moved to approve the November 17, 2021 special meeting minutes. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

C [PM 21-30](#) Approve the December 1, 2021 special meeting minutes.

M-Windsor/S-Mudry moved to approve the December 1, 2021 special meeting minutes. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie informed the commission that the joint work session with the Assembly was scheduled for January 13th and the next regular meeting was January 19th. Ainslie noted that City Hall would be closed December 24th and 31st in observation of Christmas and New Years Day. Ainslie introduced an Assembly discussion regarding the adoption of place names of historic and cultural significance. Christianson elaborated that the Assembly wanted to gather feedback and interest in the participation from commissions. Christianson explained that the work to identify appropriate place names could be done by a new task force, an existing commission or committee, or through grassroots movement from the public. Christianson explained

that the work would collaboration with and guidance from Sitka Tribe of Alaska to identify appropriate place names.

VI. REPORTS

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

D [CUP 21-19](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a conditional use permit request for a short-term rental at 717 Sawmill Creek Road in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district. The property is also known as Portion of Lot 25, Pinehurst Addition. The request is filed by Benjamin Timby. The owners of record are Benjamin Timby and Tiffany Justice.

Ainslie introduced the proposal for a short-term rental of a single-family home with 3 beds and 2 bathrooms at 717 Sawmill Creek Road. Ainslie explained that the property was the primary dwelling unit of the applicant, who wished to rent out the property while away for work, as their work often required travel for extended periods. The application identified a maximum of 6 guests.

Ainslie noted the substandard lot size at about 2,500 sq. ft. and the lack of off-street parking. Ainslie explained that the site not having off-street parking was a legal non-conformity with the zoning code however the impacts of parking should be considered.

Ainslie analyzed the impacts to traffic, noise, and odor and stated that the anticipated impact was no greater than would otherwise be expected from residential use. Ainslie noted that there were no buffers around the property, however a greenbelt at the rear of the property reduced potential impacted parties. Ainslie explained that while ADOT did not submit public comment, the Sawmill Creek Road project was scheduled to take place in the summer.

Ainslie cited Comprehensive Plan E.D. 6.5 in support of the proposal. Though the lack of on-site parking may present an issue, Ainslie stated that the proximity to downtown may reduce the need for parking. Staff recommended approval.

The applicant, Ben Timby, was present. Timby explained that the property was the primary residence of himself and his wife, who worked on sailboats which required significant international travel. Timby explained that a long-term rental was challenging when they returned home.

Spivey asked for clarification on the 6 guest maximum, and whether that would be 6 adults or adults and children. Timby responded that the 6 guest maximum was based on the number of beds in the home. Spivey elaborated that 6 adults might require 3 cars and given the lack of parking availability both on-site and on the street, the use may increase parking pressures in the neighborhood. Windsor commented that the impact of parking would be similar to that of allowable use as a long-term rental and asked if the property would be managed while rented. Timby replied that Candace Rutledge would be the property manager.

Riley commented that there were differences between anticipated impacts from short-term and long-term rentals, particularly with long term renters being able to adjust to challenges such as the lack of parking and the Sawmill Creek Road project. Timby replied that they viewed the Sawmill Creek Road project as a temporary challenge and

felt their property manager would be able to assist guests. Timby added that the potential impact of parking was present in the use as a long-term rental or residence.

The Commission discussed possibilities to mitigate potential impacts of parking through conditions, referenced a past case where a condition was added that the applicant secure a parking space and provide bicycles for renters. The Commission could not find appropriate conditions to mitigate parking concerns.

M-Windsor/S-Mudry moved to approve the conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 717 Sawmill Creek Road in the R-1 Single-Family/Duplex District, subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 9 of Amended Pinehurst Subdivision. The request was filed by Benjamin Timby. The owner of record was Benjamin Timby and Tiffany Justice. Motion failed 0-4 by voice vote.

M-Windsor/S-Mudry moved to adopt and approve the required findings for conditional use permits as listed in the staff report. Motion failed 0-4 by voice vote.

E [P 21-07](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a final plat for a lot merger to result in one lot at 125 and 127 Knutson Drive in the R-2 multifamily district. The property is also known as Lot 3A Bonnie Subdivision and Lot 2 Knutson Subdivision Phase III. The request is filed by Michael and Tonya Venneberg. The owners of record are Michael and Tonya Venneberg.

Ainslie introduced the proposal for a lot merger to merge two lots into one lot at 125 and 127 Knutson. Ainslie explained that the properties, under common ownership of the applicants, functioned as a single-family home with one lot primarily serving as additional parking for the home. Ainslie noted that the lot merger would provide space for an addition to the existing home as well as a garage, though no development plans had been established yet.

Ainslie explained that the resultant lot would be 34,518 sq. ft., far exceeding the 6,000 sq. ft. minimum required in the R-2 zone. Ainslie noted no adverse impacts. Staff recommended approval.

The applicants, Mike and Tonya Venneberg, were present. Having no questions, the Commission dismissed the applicants. The Commission voiced their approval of the request.

M-Riley/S-Mudry moved to approve the final plat for a lot merger of the properties at 125 and 127 Knutson Drive in the R-2 multifamily district. The properties were also known as Lot 3A Bonnie Subdivision and Lot 2 Knutson Subdivision Phase III. The request was filed by Michael and Tonya Venneberg. The owners of record were Michael and Tonya Venneberg. 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.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objections, Chair Spivey adjourned the meeting at 7:08pm.