



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Draft

Planning Commission

Wednesday, August 18, 2021

7:30 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Chris Spivey (Chair), Stacy Mudry, Wendy Alderson, Katie Riley, Thor Christianson (Assembly Liaison)
Absent: Darrell Windsor (Excused)
Staff: Amy Ainslie, Ben Mejia
Public: Hedy Hodges, Nancy Young, John Leach, Bridget Kauffman, Ted Laufenberg, Jim Brennan, Melinda Hofstad, Dawn Young, Fenton Allen, Emily Pearce, John Pearce

Chair Spivey called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 21-19](#) Approve the August 4, 2021 meeting minutes.

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

B [PM 21-20](#) Approve the August 4, 2021 special meeting minutes.

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

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie explained that there was no tourism planning special meeting scheduled for the evening, Ainslie informed the Commission that the planning effort was a little ahead of schedule and that staff would inform the Commission of the next tourism planning meeting, likely to be scheduled for September 1.

Ainslie informed the Commission that the Public Works and Planning Departments would meet with the Department of Transportation on the Sawmill Creek Road project.

Ainslie noted that Commissioner Mudry stated that she would be away on September 1, and asked Commissioners if there were any other planned absences. The Commission did not identify any other scheduling conflicts.

VI. REPORTS**VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS****C** [CUP 21-12](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a request for a conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 1206B Edgecumbe Drive, in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district. The property is also known as Lot 9, Block 20, Northwest Addition, U.S. Survey 3303 A&B. The request is filed by Hedy Hodges. The owners of record are Mark and Hedy Hodges.

Ainslie introduced the proposal for a short-term rental in a 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom apartment in a duplex at 1206B Edgecumbe Drive. Ainslie noted that given the small size of the unit, it was unlikely that more than 1 vehicle would be utilized for the rental, though Ainslie recognized adequate space was available in the driveway to provide at least 4 off-street parking spaces. Ainslie explained that the renter handout instructed renters to use street parking. Ainslie identified the property's approximate 75' distance from the front property line, mature trees and vegetation on site, and fencing on the south side of the property as buffers from surrounding uses. Ainslie informed the Commission that, as this was the primary residence of the applicants, potential adverse impacts such as noise and odor could be managed or mitigated by the owner. Staff recommended approval.

The applicant, Hedy Hodges, was present. Spivey asked if the applicant had considered using the property for long-term rental. Hodges replied that they had considered longer-term rental of the space but intended to use the space for family to assist with child care, and the use of short-term rental would occur when family was not in-town to help pay the mortgage cost.

Alderson noted that the garbage cans were currently on the side of the house, and expressed concern of attracting bears. Hodges replied that they could keep the garbage cans in the garage.

Alderson expressed her wish for more long-term rentals but commented that having the owners on-site mitigated her concern.

M-Mudry/S-Riley moved to approve the conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 1206B Edgecumbe Drive in the R-1 Single-Family/Duplex District, subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 9, Block 20, Northwest Addition, U.S. Survey 3303 A&B. The request was filed by Hedy Hodges. The owners of record were Mark and Hedy Hodges. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

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

D [VAR 21-14](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a request for a variance to reduce the front setback from 10' to 0', the side setback from 9' to 5', and the rear setback from 8' to 0' at 2625 Halibut Point Road, in the R-2 MHP Multifamily and Mobile Home District. The property is also known as

Portion 3 of Lot L, U.S. Survey 2750. The request is filed by Nancy Young. The owner of record is Whitcomb Properties, LLC.

Ainslie introduced the proposal to reduce the front, rear, and side setbacks at 2625 Halibut Point Road to facilitate placement of a manufactured home with deck and shed on a space within the existing trailer court.

Ainslie explained that the reduction to the front setback from 10' to 0' was for the placement of a 10'x12' shed and the dwelling itself would not encroach upon the 10' setback. Ainslie identified the over 20' of space from the paved right-of-way to the front property line and the steep grade change from the road to the property as impact-mitigating buffers.

Ainslie explained the proposed reduction of the side setback from 9' to 5' was to facilitate the placement of the structure and provide access and parking on the northern portion of the lot. Ainslie explained that the side setback was 9' because the lot did not maintain 9' on the northern side property line, as was typically expected in zones with split side setbacks.

Ainslie explained the proposal to reduce the rear setback from 8' to 0' to allow for the placement of a deck on the waterside of the dwelling. Ainslie noted that while the proposal was to build the deck to 0' from the property line, approximately 18' of fill separated the rear property line and the tideland area.

Ainslie described the proposal as providing a new housing opportunity that was well buffered from surrounding uses. Staff recommended approval.

Nancy Young, the applicant, was present. Young explained that the proposed space in the trailer court had previously been used for storage and that granting of the setback reductions would help the placement of a structure for prospective buyers. Having no further questions, the Commission excused the applicant. The Commission voiced their approval of the application.

M-Alderson/S-Mudry moved to approve the zoning variance for reductions to the setbacks at 2625 Halibut Point Road in the R-2 MHP Multifamily and Mobile Home District subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Portion 3 of Lot L, U.S. Survey 2750. The request was filed by Nancy Young. The owner of record was Whitcomb Properties, LLC. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

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

E [ZA 21-01](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a request for a zoning map amendment to rezone 4951 Halibut Point Road from R-1 single-family and duplex residential district to R - Recreation district. The property is also known as a portion of Lot 1, USS 3670. The request is filed by City and Borough of Sitka. The owner of record is City and Borough of Sitka.

Ainslie introduced the proposal to change the 17 acre lot at 4951 Halibut Point Road from R-1 single-family and duplex residential district to R - Recreation zoning. Ainslie described the site as a undeveloped and heavily wooded municipally-owned site with varying topography included in the No Name Mountain Master Plan. Ainslie noted that

the No Name Mountain Master Plan had identified high-end residential or for a recreation venture due to the high cost of site preparation and development.

Ainslie explained that a Request For Information (RFI) for the site had been issued in the summer of 2020 to gauge market interest with the Request For Proposal (RFP) issued over the winter of 2020-2021 with only one response to the RFP from Shee Atiká Incorporated and Adventure Sitka for a commercial recreation development.

Ainslie explained that the R-1 zoning designation was often used as a holding designation for future land use. Ainslie described the intent of the Recreation zone and explained that the appropriate designation of the zoning should be evaluated for long-term public benefit to accrue from the protection offered by the designation. Ainslie noted that the area had recreational value, that while there was not existing recreation zoning nearby the lot was of substantial size and would serve to buffer for nearby residential and commercial uses, and the proposal was consistent with the No Name Mountain Master Plan identified best use of the land and Comprehensive Plan action item ED 6.5 and PTR 6.1 to support the visitor industry and the commercial use of recreational facilities. Staff recommended approval.

John Leach, who represented the applicant, was present. Leach explained that of the possible zones to allow for the proposed development, recreation was the preferred outcome. Leach informed the Commission that the property was to be leased with a 20 year base term with option to renew for 10 years. Riley asked what happened to site developments after the lessee no longer held the lease. Leach explained that it would become the property of the lease holder and that the city would work with the lessee for removal as needed with safety as a top concern.

Ainslie read public comment from Heather Meuret, who voiced disapproval of the proposal and would rather have seen the land used for residential development.

Alderson voiced concern over the designation of recreation for a privately operated site and asked if there was public access. Ainslie replied the 100' access easement along the water accessed by a 50' access easement. The Commission voiced their approval of the proposal.

M-Mudry/S-Riley moved to recommend approval of the zoning map amendment to rezone 4951 Halibut Point Road R-1 single-family and duplex residential district to the R recreation district. The property was also known as A portion of Lot 1, US Survey 3670. The request was filed by the City and Borough of Sitka. The owner of record was the City and Borough of Sitka. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

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

F [ZA 21-02](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a zoning text amendment to Title 22 of the Sitka General Code to amend permitted and conditional uses in the R - Recreation district. The request is filed by City and Borough of Sitka and Baranof Property Owners Association.

Ainslie introduced the proposal for a zoning text amendment for the Recreation district to allow eating and drinking places, amusement and entertainment, outdoor amphitheater, resort, utility facilities, and public water supply facilities as conditional uses. Ainslie stated that the proposal expanded options for light commercial uses in the Recreation district while allowing for public consideration of the new uses. Ainslie

noted that the application had been used to address proposed changes for Baranof Property Owners Association (BPOA) of Baranof Warm Springs as well as the proposed use of 4951 Halibut Point Road. Staff recommended approval.

Christianson excused himself at 8:16pm.

John Leach was present, as applicant representative for the City and Borough of Sitka. Leach commented that the proposed changes were in keeping with the intent of Recreation zoning and allowed for development of the 4951 Halibut Point Road property. Ted Loffenburg was present as one the applicants for BPOA. Loffenburg noted that the Conditional Use Permit process allowed for residents to be notified and a public process to occur for changes to Baranof Warm Springs.

The Commission opened the floor for public comment.

Jim Brennan, Melinda Hofstad, Dawn Young, Bridget Loffenburg, Fenton Allen, and John Pearce voiced their support for the proposal. Ainslie read submitted public comment from Barbara Morse, Stephen Morse, and Mike Trotter who also voiced support of the proposal. Riley asked for use definitions to be included. Ainslie responded that uses definitions could be provided as needed at a later date, to which Riley agreed. The Commission voiced their approval of the proposal.

M-Riley/S-Alderson moved to recommend approval of the zoning text change to amend Title 22 of the Sitka General Code, amending permitted and conditional uses in the Recreation district as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objections, Chair Spivey adjourned the meeting at 8:44pm.