



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Chair Windsor and Planning Commission Members

From: Amy Ainslie, Planning & Community Development Director *AA*

Date: March 13, 2026

Subject: Requested PUD Amendments to Whitcomb Heights Subdivision

Background

The applicant, Sound Development, LLC, has requested to sell Lot 18, Block 8, Whitcomb Heights Subdivision for the purpose of telecommunications infrastructure without installation of water and sewer services, or completion of right-of-way improvements. This requires an amendment to the Whitcomb Heights Subdivision PUD. The Assembly reviewed this request in February, and while open to the idea, wanted the Planning Commission to determine whether the site is suitable for this use.

Analysis

Staff has limited information available about this location's suitability for a telecommunications tower outside the stated position of Tlingit & Haida (d.b.a. Tidal Network). However, it offers some benefits given that there isn't existing residential development on these two blocks (i.e., property owners seeking to build/purchase homes in the area would be aware of the tower's placement here). There may also be benefits in terms of advancing the overall development of the area in terms of project funding/cost.

- The lot is 11,878 square feet and identified as "Moderate" slide risk zone per the CBS commissioned 2016 Shannon & Wilson study.
- The Whitcomb Heights Subdivision is a Planned Unit Development (PUD) in which uses for subdivided lots are specified on the plat. Lot 18, Block 8 is identified for use as a duplex (though a single-family home could also be built).

This could also be an opportunity to discuss appropriate uses of other lots identified as high slide risk per the Shannon & Wilson report (perhaps storage or other uses that don't have human occupancy).

Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Commission discuss the following:

1. Is the Commission amenable to the PUD amendment that would allow a telecommunications tower on a lot in this subdivision rather than residential development?
2. If so, what information, documentation, research, etc., will the Planning Commission need to evaluate and determine the suitability of this site for a telecommunications tower, and any development standards that should be associated with it (i.e. height limitations, setback requirements, etc.).
3. Are there other PUD amendments – particularly lot use designations within Blocks 8 and 9 of the subdivision given previous landslide risk assessments – that the Commission would like to consider or propose?

Encl: Whitcomb Heights PUD Subdivision
Maps & Parcel Information
2016 Shannon & Wilson study