



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Eisenbeisz and Assembly Members

Thru: John Leach, Municipal Administrator

From: Ron Vinson, Public Works Director

Date: May 22, 2024

Subject: Modification to Sitka General Code 15.10.410 - Joint Use Water Lines

Background

Ordinance 2024-14 proposes a change to Sitka General Code 15.10.410 that will authorize the Public Works Director to allow joint use of a single water service for multiple structures on a single property, where good cause is shown. The proposed ordinance is in alignment with analogous wastewater utility code that currently exists and is anticipated to have a number of benefits for the community.

The rationale for this ordinance is multifaceted and aligns with the broader goals of enhancing the ease of property development and improving the overall utilization of water resources.

Analysis

Several key factors for promoting this ordinance include the following:

Streamlining Building Requirements:

Allowing the sharing of a single water service for multiple structures on a property simplifies the building process, reducing the burden on property owners where it may not provide any increased value to the owner, future owners, or the community. With fewer separate water service installations required, property owners can navigate building requirements more efficiently, leading to streamlined development processes and reduced unnecessary barriers.

Alignment with Other Existing Code:

Currently, Sitka General Code has a provision in the adopted wastewater utility code language whereby the Public Works Director is, in fact authorized to allow for joint use of wastewater utility infrastructure, where good cause is shown.

Sitka General Code 15.05.130 - B.

“A separate sewer connection shall be provided for every building. Exceptions will be allowed only by special permission granted by the public works director for good cause shown.”

The existing wastewater code requirements serve as a successful model for the language proposed in this ordinance.

Cost and Time Savings:

By enabling shared water service for multiple structures, property owners can benefit from reduced expenses and time savings associated with the installation, maintenance, and updates of multiple individual water service lines. Additionally, the consolidation of water services leads to lower infrastructure investment and upkeep costs, contributing to economic efficiency for property owners and the community as a whole.

Reduced Environmental Impact:

Implementing shared water service minimizes the number of service line penetrations into the water main, resulting in reduced ground disturbance and environmental impact. With fewer service line installations, the ordinance supports sustainability efforts by promoting efficient water resource usage and minimizing land disruption, adjacent roadway disruption, and adjacent utility disruption associated with utility infrastructure installation.

Reduced System Vulnerability:

As previously mentioned, reducing the number of service line penetrations into the water mains is anticipated to have a variety of positive benefits. Specifically, a reduction or lessening of penetrations into the main will reduce the vulnerability that comes as an inherent risk of any work that disturbs the water main. Fewer penetrations into the water main naturally results in less opportunity for failure of connection points, fittings, joints, etc.

Property Development Flexibility:

The new ordinance provides property owners with increased flexibility in developing their land, offering viable options for optimizing space and resources. By allowing shared water service, property owners can make more efficient use of their property, adapt to evolving community needs, and engage in effective land use planning and development.

Fiscal Note

No financial impact.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Ordinance 2024-14 be adopted, modifying the existing water utility code language to allow for joint use of water utility lines, where good cause can be shown, and upon approval of the Public Works Director.

Encl: Ordinance No. 2024-14

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-14

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA AMENDING TITLE 15 "PUBLIC UTILITIES" OF THE SITKA GENERAL CODE BY UPDATING CHAPTER 15.10 "WATER SYSTEM", SECTION 410 "JOINT SERVICE CONNECTIONS"

1. CLASSIFICATION. This ordinance is of a permanent nature and is intended to become a part of the Sitka General Code (SGC).

2. SEVERABILITY. If any provision of this ordinance or any application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this ordinance and application to any person or circumstance shall not be affected.

3. PURPOSE. The purpose of this ordinance is to allow the Public Works Director discretion in making an exception as to joint service connections.

4. ENACTMENT. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka that the Sitka General Code Title 15, entitled "Public Utilities", be amended by updating Chapter 15, entitled "Water System", Section 410 entitled "Joint Service Connections" to read as follows (deleted language stricken, new language underlined):

Title 15
PUBLIC UTILITIES

Chapters:

15.10 Water System

Chapter 15.10
WATER SYSTEM

Sections:

15.10.410 Joint service connections.

15.10.410 Joint service connections.

A separate water service connection shall be provided for each separate residential or commercial structure. Exceptions will be allowed only by special permission granted by the Public Works Director for good cause shown. The minimum diameter shall be no less than one inch. It is prohibited to intertie two or more residential structures into a single and/or common service connection. It is prohibited by Section 308 of the Uniform Plumbing Code for a water service to cross property lines unless the lines are within CBS-approved utility easements. This shall apply even though the property may be owned by the same person. Lease lines are to be treated in the same manner as if they were property lines. If the lot is subdivided, the owner shall, if needed, relocate his service connection or extend the water main in order to comply with the regulations of this chapter.

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5. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall become effective on the day after the date of its passage.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska, this 11th day of June, 2024.

Steven Eisenbeisz, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sara Peterson, MMC
Municipal Clerk

1st reading: 5/28/24
2nd and final reading: 6/11/24

Sponsor: Administrator