



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Draft

Planning Commission

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Darrell Windsor (Chair), Katie Riley (via Zoom), Stacy Mudry, Robin Sherman (via Zoom; arrived 7:16 p.m.), Thor Christianson (Assembly Liaison)

Excused: Wendy Alderson

Public: Kristina Cranston, Caitlin Way, Darryl Rehkopf, Bernadette Rasmussen, Tess Heyburn, Megan Pasternak, Carolyn Nichols, Jack Navitsky, Kelli M. Leonard, Patti MacPike, Peter Hagan, Brita Speck

Staff: Kim Davis, Ariadne Will

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

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 25-14](#) Approve the August 6, 2025 meeting minutes.

M/Mudry-S/Riley moved to approve the August 6, 2025 meeting minutes. Motion passed 3-0 by roll call vote.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

Peter Hagan and Kristina Cranston spoke under Persons to be Heard. Hagan said industrialization in downtown Sitka was creating excessive noise pollution. Cranston, who lived near Oja Way, said she and several neighbors were concerned about the possible development of property at 410 Oja Way as a bus station. She said that the possible development was a rumor and not confirmed but that neighbors were feeling uneasy.

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Davis said the hearing of the appeal regarding VAR 25-01, related to Tidal Network's proposed telecommunications tower on Nancy Court, was scheduled for hearing by the Office of Administrative Hearings the following evening at Centennial Hall. She said too that it was Commissioner Mudry's last meeting thanking her for her service, and that given some commissioners were attending the meeting via Zoom, all votes at the meeting would need to be roll call votes.

VI. REPORTS

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS**B** [P 25- 06](#)

Public hearing and consideration of Alaska Tidelands Survey 1753. The applicant is Brita Speck for Frederick D. Smith Living Trust. The owner of record is State of Alaska.

Davis provided an overview of Alaska Tidelands Survey 1753, which had the purpose of defining the lease boundary area for tidelands adjacent to Tract F of U.S. Survey 3555, part of the Gilmore Island Group. The tidelands survey encompassed a dock, float, and gangway. The Department of Natural Resources, which owned the tidelands, required sign-off from the local platting authority, leading to the survey's appearance before the commission. Davis said no further impacts were associated with the survey.

Applicant Brita Speck, who represented her client, Frederick Smith, said that the survey was part of a new process at the state level and that the commission could expect to see more as tidelands leases were renewed and when lessees were placing new docks. Davis said another tidelands survey was set for hearing at the next meeting, and that she found only a couple records of tidelands surveys such as this appearing before the commission in the past.

No public comment or commission deliberation occurred.

M/Mudry-S/Riley moved to approve ALaska Tideland Survey 1753 in the General Island district. The property was also known as All of Tract F, U.S. Survey 3555. The request was filed by Brita Speck for Frederick D. Smith Living Trust. The owner of record was the State of Alaska. Motion passed 4-0 by roll call vote.

C [MISC 25-12](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a modification to CUP 24-02, a conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 419 Marine Street in the R-1 single-family, duplex residential district. The property is also known as Lot 31, Block 26, Spruce Glen Subdivision. The request is filed by Caitlin Way. The owners of record are Caitlin Way and Lesa Way.

Davis introduced a request to amend CUP 24-02, a conditional use permit approve by the commission in 2024 for use of 419 Marine Street as a short-term rental. The house on the property had two units--an upstairs and a downstairs--and the applicant had originally intended to rent the upstairs unit out while living in the downstairs unit. Since the original approval, the applicant wished to instead live in the upstairs unit and rent the downstairs.

Davis said staff recommended approval of the amendment. Applicant Caitlin Way did not have anything to add. The commission did not deliberate and no public comment was received.

M/Mudry-S/Riley moved to approve the conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 419 Marine Street, Apartment A, in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district, subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 31, Block 26, Spruce Glen Subdivision. The request was filed by Caitlin Way. The owners of record were Caitlin Way and Lesa Way. Motion passed 4-0 by roll call 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 roll

call vote.

D [ZA 25-04](#)

Discussion, direction, and decision regarding proposed zoning code amendment to Sitka General Code 22.20.130, prohibiting roosters.

Will introduced a discussion/direction/decision item for the commission to consider the prohibition of roosters in Sitka. An applicant had requested a zoning text change regarding the banning of roosters either within the City and Borough, or within residential zones. Will said an amendment as proposed would be regulated within SGC 22.20.130 A: Large domestic animals, and would require approval of an ordinance by the Assembly.

In a Powerpoint presentation, Will said both the zoning code and the animal code had provisions that could be used to enforce discordance caused by roosters. She also provided code examples from Fairbanks, Haines, Kenai, Wasilla, and Anchorage regarding the prohibition and allowance of roosters. She walked the commission through three possible options for how to change code--outright prohibition, prohibition in residential zones, or allowance by conditional use in certain zones--and said the commission may also want to consider additional criteria, including the securing of outdoor domestic animals and enforcement of the zoning text amendment by the Animal Control Officer.

The commission asked Will how many complaints had been received. Will said the Planning Department hadn't received any beyond the applicant's zoning change request, but estimated the Animal Control Officer had received more than ten complaints. She said she wasn't sure how many of those calls were unique calls, but did believe there were a handful of different roosters the Animal Control Officer had received complaints about. Will said the Animal Control Officer was supportive of the commission but had not provided an opinion about the code change request.

Applicant Carolyn Nichols said that she wanted roosters prohibited in residential zones, as they were a nuisance and capable of disrupting sleep. Nichols said that she wished for stricter fines and a "three strikes" policy, and for more response to her complaints. In response to a commission question, she said she had given up on speaking with her neighbor, who never took action.

Under public comment, Megan Pasternak and Peter Hagan both spoke to the nuisance of rooster noise. Both said chickens near properties they owned would wander onto property, pulling up gardens and making messes on porches.

During deliberation, Commissioner Sherman asked whether there were provisions in Alaska Statute regarding roosters. Will said she was unsure. The commission noted the absence of the Animal Control Officer at the meeting and said the issue seemed to be with the enforcement of existing code, not with an absence of code provisions. Commissioner Riley said she felt a broader process was needed to allow for more input from the public. The commission said too that it did not feel staff had the capacity to pursue a zoning text change related to roosters when there were other priorities.

Assembly Liaison Christianson said he would email the City Administrator to put the topic on his radar. The commission requested further information from the police department regarding enforcement, the likelihood of enforcing additional code, and better numbers regarding the prevalence of the problem.

M/Riley-S/Mudry moved to postpone further discussion of the zoning text change regarding the prohibition of roosters until staff gathered further

information from the Legal Department regarding provisions in Alaska Statute, the Police and Fire Commission, the Police Department, and the Animal Control Officer. Motion passed 4-0 by roll call vote.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

In response to testimony during Persons to Be Heard, Commissioner Riley requested staff provide a report at the following meeting regarding the zoning of Oja Way and adjacent streets.

Chair Windsor adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.