



City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street • Sitka, Alaska 99835

Memorandum

TO: Mayor Scott McAdams and Members of the Assembly

FROM: Don Alexander, Chair, Sitka Planning Commission

SUBJECT: Potential Reorganization of the Sitka Planning Department

DATE: September 21st, 2010

The Sitka Planning Commission is requesting that any proposed reorganization involving the Sitka Planning Department be forwarded to the Planning Commission for review prior to action by the City and Borough Assembly.

The Planning Commission is further requesting that the full details be provided for board review and that the Assembly does not take any action until the Planning Commission has ample time to submit a recommendation.

A motion on this request unanimously passed at the September 7th 2010 Planning Commission meeting.

The Planning Commission is concerned that a potential reorganization may adversely affect the board's ability to complete its missions. Until the specifics of a proposed reorganization is forwarded to the Commission, the board is unable to make an independent review and recommendation.

The motion on the request to the Assembly was initiated by one of the Planning Commissioners who has been closely following the developments on the matter.

Thank you.

September 21st, 2010

Dear Mayor McAdams and Members of the Assembly,

Thank you for allowing me to comment at your meeting of August 24th on the proposed reorganization of the Planning Department. While this issue has been difficult, the quality of attention the Mayor and the Assembly has given is sincerely appreciated.

I have carefully considered the concerns that were raised at the meeting in August and will continue with my commitment to address them. While it has always been my practice to comply with directives of the Administrator, issues surfaced on the 24th that provided an opportunity for additional work.

Updates on four separate matters are provided in the attached emails. In addition, a report outlining the utilization of the GIS system is included that you will find particularly informative. These materials confirm that every effort is being made to accomplish my tasks.

Moreover, additional information has also surfaced that would be of interest to the Assembly.

Thank you very much for your energy and your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "S. Wells Williams".

S. Wells Williams, AICP

Wells Williams

From: Wells Williams [wells@cityofsitka.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 08, 2010 1:41 PM
To: 'Jim Dinley'
Cc: 'Melissa Henshaw'; 'Mike at MainStreetGIS'; 'Sara Peterson'; 'Vim at MainStreetGIS'; 'Colleen Ingman'
Subject: GIS Training Sessions - Email 1 of a Series of 4

Hi Jim...

This email represents the first of four updates on issues that you have raised...

The other three updates will be sent, in short order, this afternoon...

Two city wide general GIS training sessions have been scheduled and placed in your calendar.

The sessions will be held at 10:30 am on Monday September 20th and 10:30 am on Monday September 27th.

The sessions will be GoToMeeting training sessions lead by Vim Tingle. While they will be identical, we have scheduled two sessions to start in an effort to maximize staff attendance.

The main session will be held in the Maksoutoff Room at Harrigan Centennial Hall. Staff can either attend the meeting in that room, or, if they prefer, we can give them a log in so they can attend by their own computer in their office.

If there is a demand, we can schedule additional sessions for other staff.

The second, more technical level of training, is pending.

Thanks...

Wells

Wells Williams, AICP
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Wells Williams

From: Wells Williams [wells@cityofsitka.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 08, 2010 2:47 PM
To: 'Jim Dinley'
Cc: 'Melissa Henshaw'; 'Vim at MainStreetGIS'; 'Mike at MainStreetGIS'
Subject: GIS Progress Update - Email 2 of a Series of 4

Hi Jim..

Here is a written update on the GIS project. It is current as of the date of the email.

First – a response to the email chain of August 4th – The island zoning layer was placed on the GIS site after it was pointed out that maps were unavailable for download. An email of explanation and an apology was sent to Mr. Nitray. Island zoning maps are now available online through the site maintained by MainstreetGIS.

The ESRI ArcMap software that is used to edit GIS shp files is installed on my desktop, my red laptop, and Mr. Weatherman's desktop. If the concurrent use software is not installed on Ms. Henshaw's new desktop, it will be in a day or so.

Since the most recent BLM grant (that expires October 31st of this year) does not have be fully utilized for imagery, we are using some of those resources to get GIS farther out into the organization. As you will recall, MainstreetGIS was able to get lower cost satellite imagery for us so we have funds remaining.

Roughly \$5,000 was spent of those funds for the compilation of Public Works utility data. Stephen Weatherman will be using \$3500 for additional ESRI ArcMap software for Tad's computer to further the utility project.

Vim Tingle is attempting to contact Mike White, at the Police Department, to determine what their GIS software needs are. BLM grant resources are expected to contribute to some, if not all, of those costs.

The GIS Viewer software has been installed on Tad's computer, Michael Harmon's computer, Dave Miller's computer in the Fire Hall, Chris Brewton's computer, and Sheldon's computer. A couple of months ago, when the Viewer was installed on Fire Department's system, the Police Department requested (and received) copies of the software disk so they could do their own installs.

Dave Miller and Mike White received training on the Viewer on August 24th after we made repeated attempts to schedule it earlier. Mike White is genuinely excited about the application and has requested that we modify the coordinate system to provide Lat/ Long. MainstreetGIS is in the process of making that change.

The Planning Office has made repeated efforts to find a mutually acceptable time to train Police Department staff. The Police Chief is aware of that request.

Michael Harmon indicated a desire to work with the Viewer on his own. I'll continue to offer my services if he has any questions about the software. The Viewer is designed to be easily used w/ minimal instruction so, outside of the quick intro I gave him, he not require assistance. His office laptop, in addition to having the Viewer, has the Sitka Utility project installed on it so he has access to the work that has been done to date.

Additional Viewer installations are pending including the Assessor's system.

Chris Brewton has had a series of conversations, arranged by the Planning Office, with MainstreetGIS for the mapping element of the Takatz Hydro studies. It was Chris's intent to contract separately with Mainstreet for

the preparation of the maps that go into all the studies. We are also coordinating all imagery acquisitions so we maximize each other's purchases.

An order is pending with DigitalGlobe for \$12,000 worth of 1 ½ meter imagery for the road system and Sitka Sound. This imagery fulfills the intent of the last BLM grant. The order was placed in early summer. We don't know if they have found sufficient clear skies to in the last ten days to complete it.

We have located other DigitalGlobe sat imagery that is about three years old for other areas. The Forest Service is acquiring that archived data for us at no charge.

On a recent Sunday, I spent 3.2 hours w/ Harris Air flying parts of the municipality for other types of imagery. 344 photos were taken. Mainstreet is compiling that into the GIS system consistent w/ plans previously discussed w/ BLM. Mark Hackett at Harris Air indicated a willingness to make available additional imagery, that can be incorporated into our system, that has been flown by their pilots. This imagery will be tied to USGS place names. When Mark and Phyllis get back from their trip, I'll go over and get it. The grant will pay any cost the photographer considers fair.

We will be acquiring at least two Trimble Juno units to facilitate that acquisition of local historical sites. These units are smaller than the Trimble handhelds, are cheaper, and have a camera. We'll start experimenting with them on a time available basis.

Streamlined procedures are being put in place to update municipal base maps, zoning maps, tax ID number, subdivision plats, and as built. A procedure was previously in place to update ownership information from the AS 400. At last report, we had only one of the roughly 300 parcels to update.

Mike Warner at MainstreetGIS is working with the State DNR Anchorage office for the BLM Master Title plats. We can't get those plats directly from BLM for legal reasons. The Alaska Mapper data has been downloaded for years.

Mainstreet will be sending the four part Map Book series they are preparing for us in approximately 14 days. The work is basically done.

Melissa will be going to ESRI headquarters in Redlands CA for intensive ArcMap training the middle of this month.

And finally, arrangements have been made with Jim DiGennaro for space on the municipal servers for map Viewer data updates. The Viewer software and initial map series is resident to individual desktops. Map updates will maintained on the server to increase currency.

The State SDMI project should provide us w/ new sat imagery in 2 to 2 ½ years. We have been in contact w/ contractor who is distributing the data. The SDMI initiative is a cooperative project between the State and other agencies to acquire and distribute sat imagery statewide... it has been years in the making and still has long lead times.

All of this work is consistent with grant commitments. It also expands on the presentations at the last three Assembly worksessions.

My apologies if parts of this report are incomplete.

Thanks

wells

Wells Williams

From: Wells Williams [wells@cityofsitka.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 08, 2010 2:56 PM
To: 'Jim Dinley'
Cc: 'Melissa Henshaw'; 'Sara Peterson'; 'Colleen Ingman'
Subject: Update 3 of 4 - Board and Commission Support

Hi Jim...

At this time, the Planning Office is providing renewed support for the Historic Preservation Commission and Long Range Planning. This support is in addition to the support provided to the Planning Commission and Planning Office support for the Assembly.

As you know, Melissa is going to Historic Preservation meetings.

I was out of town at the last LRPC meeting, but, will attend them from here on out.

Last night, the Planning Commission agreed to my request that they schedule frequent joint meetings with Historic Preservation and LRPC.

P&Z has overlapping business w/ both boards.

They will offer to attend the LRPC meeting on October 14th to discuss the comp plan updating process.

We will find a mutually acceptable time for them to go to an Historic Preservation Commission meeting to talk about project review timelines.

Thanks...

Wells

Wells Williams, AICP
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Wells Williams

From: Wells Williams [wells@cityofsitka.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 08, 2010 3:21 PM
To: 'Jim Dinley'
Cc: 'Melissa Henshaw'; 'Sara Peterson'; 'Colleen Ingman'
Subject: Update 4 of 4 - Projects

Hi Jim...

Here's the last one...

The status of the major Planning Office projects is as follows.

My apologies for the brevity. I've given you a lot today so this one is short.

GIS – covered in updates 1 and 2

Comprehensive Plan – will talk to LRPC about it if they want to Thursday night and Planning Commission will talk to them about it on October 14th. The goal remains to find a format the boards can agree to and the Assembly is interested in. Both boards have ideas.

Historic Preservation Plan – my understanding is that the contract to complete the work has been awarded. In the past, there has been interest in supplementing the State inventory with a more detailed local inventory. The Trimble Juno units may be able to assist that process if the board wishes to continue with that concept.

South Benchlands - Whitcomb Heights – Michael Harmon and Stephen Weatherman had w meeting w/ Bob Droll earlier in the process. The Planning Office will work with them on the platting process.

Sawmill Cove Industrial Park zoning changes – setback text changes will go to the Assembly after we work w the Sawmill Cove Board again on use tables. Ran that strategy by Garry White yesterday.

Zoning Map Revisions – will try to get to the clean up in district lines the end of October. The October 5th Planning Commission meeting agenda will be busy.

In addition, there are two mid to intermediate term projects that have been discussed at various levels. They are code enforcement and tightening the island zoning use tables.

Code Enforcement - Jack Ozment was in yesterday on a couple of items and I discussed a strategy w/ him since it is a long term interest of his. I also discussed it w/ the Planning Commission last night. The theory is that the Planning Office can work towards implementing the report prepared in December 2007 entitled "Strengthening Sitka Zoning Enforcement". I've developed a four part approach that can go through the public process. The 2007 report was never implemented due to the costs associated w/ it. The Planning Office can do this project at a substantially reduced cost by writing the code revisions ourselves. The two hard parts will be creating an Enforcement Board of Appeals, and, getting Assembly guidance on the enforcement priorities. If the structure is approved by the Assembly, we can handle the project w/ existing staff.

Island Zoning Use Tables – Tightening the tables was inferred during the Kasiana Island quarry conditional use issue when it hit the Assembly. Sometime next year, the Planning Office can coordinate a public process to revisit those tables.

Thanks...

City and Borough of Sitka
Geographic Information System
Data Inputs and Utilization by Department

Prepared September 21, 2010

On line site operational accessible through Cityofsitka.com

Contains parcel ownerships, assessed valuation, zoning, aerial photography, tract ownerships, nautical charts, 2007 Comprehensive Plan, USGS maps, and, more.

In house GIS Viewer that allows municipal staff to access wide format images, more property ownership information, annotate maps, utility and other data in .shp file format, and loads faster. Inexpensive intermediate software that provides a mid level GIS capability at a low cost. Viewer has full data and full screen selectable modes.

Public Works and Planning Offices have ArcMap software to edit GIS data.

Three Trimble units owned by the municipality and two antennas. Two smaller Trimble Juno units for data collection on order (possible utility collection and historic inventory collection usage)

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery was collected this month. Additional ½ meter imagery outside of the Road System and Sitka Sound is now available at the lower archived pricing.

One municipal wide GIS Viewer training session was held on September 20th. A second training session will occur on September 27th. Additional can training will take place as needed.

Planning Office Usage:

Maintain parcel maps, provide Assessing ownership data, subdivision plats, as built, and zoning information to consultant.

Oversees map maintenance and imagery acquisition.

Oversees development of Map Book series.

Aerials tied to USGS place names under development.

Completing BLM project with new satellite imagery due in October 2010 and February 2012.

Assessing Office:

Office steers folks to online site and data is served out online. Viewer installed on Property Clerk and Assessors computer. Conversations were held with the Assessor and the Municipal Attorney on the types of data that will be made available to the public in the future. Those discussions will continue with the incoming Assembly.

Legal Department:

Viewer installed on Municipal Attorney's desktop. IS to install on Sharon's desktop.

Finance:

Viewer Installed on Dave Wolff's desktop.

Administration:

Viewer installed on Administrator, Clerk, and, and Deputy Clerk's systems. Coastal Coordinator's system not up to spec for Viewer.

Information Services:

Will Hanbury and Jim DiGennaro have been trained in Viewer installations and have volunteered to take over that function. Additional installations are being identified along with computer upgrades. The IS department is streamlining the installation process to make it faster.

Public Works Usage:

Utility maps have been compiled into corrected .shp file format. Additional details being added to utility features using ArcMap concurrent use license. Municipal Engineer and Map Tech have ArcMap. ArcMap 10 training materials have been purchased and provided to the Municipal Engineer. MainstreetGIS completed additional programming to streamline the data input process. The Municipal Engineer has stated that additional training by the Planning Office at this time is not necessary.

Operations Engineers and Director have Viewer installed. Viewer being installed on Building Officials desktops. Building Department records in the hands of consultant to see if they can be easily attached to parcels. Environmental Superintendent to bring in laptop. Wastewater desktops to be changed out and Viewer will go on after that occurs.

Fire Department:

Viewer installed on Fire Chief's computer and Engineer has been trained. Lat/Long being added to Viewer per their request which will maximize call tracking. The Engineer's new desktop will be delivered to him with the Viewer installed.

Search and Rescue:

Laptop to be brought in for Viewer install. Lat/Long will assist searches.

Police:

Parcel map, aerial imagery, and ownership information have become critical elements of daily operations and is necessary to achieve their system performance standards. Viewer has been distributed to them. Steps underway to streamline data maintenance.

Electrical Department:

Imagery used in Takatz Lake hydro studies. Imagery collection being coordinated. Department uses MainstreetGIS for map production.