



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Robin Sherman (Acting Chair), Wendy Alderson, Margaret Frank, Jacquie Foss (via Zoom), Katie Riley (Assembly Liaison)
Absent: Darrell Windsor (excused)
Staff: Amy Ainslie, Kim Davis, Ariadne Will
Public: Patrick O'Neill, Tamara O'Neill, Tess Heyburn, Larry Edwards, Randy Hughey, Scott Saline, JJ Carlson, Shannon Haugland (Sitka Sentinel)

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

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 26-02](#) Approve the January 21, 2026 meeting minutes.

**M-Alderson/S-Frank moved to approve the January 21, 2026 meeting minutes.
Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.**

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie told the commission that staff had received an appeal of the commission's decision on CUP 25-17. The appeal hearing by the Board of Adjustment was tentatively scheduled for Feb. 24. Ainslie also said staff was continuing with its rezoning efforts and was budgeting funding for code changes in the FY27 budget. She said a supplemental appropriation was to be requested from the Assembly to allow for an accelerated timeline for code changes regarding telecommunications structures.

VI. REPORTS

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

B [CUP 26-01](#) Public hearing and consideration of a conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 2309 Merganser Drive in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district. The property is also known as Lot Two (2), Peterson Subdivision. The request is filed by Tamara and Patrick O'Neill. The owners of record are Tamara and Patrick O'Neill.

Davis introduced a request for a conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 2309 Merganser Drive in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district. The owner-applicants planned to rent out their three-bedroom home to a maximum of eight guests while they were to be traveling in the summer. The rental was to be managed by Sitka Travel. Davis said staff recommended the applicants include additional wayfinding signage to the property.

Applicants Tamara and Patrick O'Neill did not have anything to add. In response to a commission question, they said they were planning on visiting family during the times when the house was to be rented out.

No public comment was received. During deliberation, the commission stated additional signage would be helpful.

M-Alderson/S-Frank moved to approve the conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 2309 Merganser Drive in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot Two (2), Peterson Subdivision. The request was filed by Tamara and Patrick O'Neill. The owners or record were Tamara and Patrick O'Neill. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M-Alderson/S-Frank 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.

C [MISC 26-02](#)

Discussion on housing priorities for municipal land disposals.

Assembly Liaison Riley provided an overview of a proposed amendment to Section 18 of Sitka General Code that would change how the city could dispose of municipal lands for the purposes of housing development. According to a flow chart provided at the meeting, the disposal would be initiated via a resolution drafted by the Planning Commission and adopted by the Assembly. The resolution would establish priorities for housing types and affordability. Developers would then be able to express interest in a parcel, describe development proposed, and state qualifications. A public review and approval process would follow, after which a short RFI period would allow other developers to express interest. If no responses were received, a disposal ordinance would be drafted; if other developers were interested, the city would proceed with the RFP process. Ainslie clarified that the intent was to shorten the disposal process when no more than one party was interested in a property.

Riley requested feedback from the commission. Sherman said she felt the 30-day RFI period was too short and commented on the need for some development proposals to seek additional permitting from the Planning Commission. The commission discussed linking priorities within the resolution to specific locations. Ainslie said a developer could apply for a CUP during the disposal process but that platting actions may need to wait until after the disposal would be complete. Sherman expressed concern regarding the expense of engineering and information that could limit development that might arise following disposal and prior to development. Ainslie mentioned the possibility of a purchase agreement.

During public comment, Scott Saline said he would like land disposal actions to allow for local young people to pick up land and develop it themselves. Randy Hughey requested the 30-day RFI period occur simultaneously with the public review and approval step depicted in the flow chart. He said developers would, at that point in the process, have an assessment showing the feasibility of development on a given parcel.

Following public comment, the commission discussed resources that could be made available to keep the housing stock created somewhat affordable. Possible resources included the submittal of public records request to access any studies or plans related to properties and the potential that the city help build infrastructure to cut development costs.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was determined that Sherman and Frank were to form a subcommittee to work with Riley on a resolution to set housing priorities.

No motion made.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Acting Chair Sherman adjourned the meeting at 8:02 p.m.