



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Draft

Planning Commission

Wednesday, October 1, 2025

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Darrell Windsor (Chair), Katie Riley, Wendy Alderson, Margaret Frank, Thor Christianson (Assembly Liaison, left 8:24 p.m.)
Excused: Robin Sherman
Staff: Amy Ainslie, Kim Davis, Ariadne Will
Public: Mike Finn, Liz Finn, Jake Trierschield, Luke Bruckert, Jay Erie, Mary Magnuson, Peter Menendez, Patricia MacPike, Michelle Kavouras, Christian Litten, JJ Carlson, Kevin Mosher, Sara Peterson, Cathy Li (Sitka Sentinel)

Chair Windsor called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

- A [PM 25-16](#) Approve the September 3, 2025 meeting minutes.

**M/Riley-S/Alderson moved to approve the September 3, 2025 meeting minutes.
Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.**

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie informed the commission that the body would again discuss cruise docks at the following meeting. She said also the Office of Administrative Hearings had issued its decision regarding VAR 25-01, the height variance request related to a telecommunications tower on Nancy Court.

VI. REPORTS

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

- B [CUP 25-14](#) Public hearing and consideration of a request for a conditional use permit for multifamily housing (four-plex) at 200 Baranof Street in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district. The property is also known as Lot 1, Jones-OJA Street Subdivision. The request is filed by Jake Trierschield. The owners of record are Peter and Linda Jones.

Davis introduced a request for a conditional use permit for multifamily housing at 200

Baranof Street in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district. The applicant was looking to place two more apartments in the building, the site of the old Etolin Street School. The building had two apartments already.

Davis said the applicant expected small increases in noise and traffic, in line with typical residential use. Applicant Jake Trierschield said he did not have anything to add and no public comment was received. The commission noted during deliberation that the property was adjacent to a grocery store with several dwelling units on its second floor. The commission also added a condition of approval prohibiting the apartments from being rented as short-term rentals. Trierschield said he was amendable to the condition.

M/Riley-S/Alderson moved to approve the conditional use permit for multifamily housing (four-plex) at 200 Baranof Street in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval as amended, with a requirement for prohibition of short-term rental uses. The property was also known as Lot One (1), Jones-Oja Street Subdivision. The request was filed by Jake Trierschield. The owners of record were Peter and Linda Jones. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M/Riley-S/Alderson 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 [CUP 25-15](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a request for a conditional use permit for a bed and breakfast at 116 Knutson Drive in the R-2 multifamily residential district. The property is also known as Lot Seventeen A (17A), Knutson Subdivision Phase III Lot Line Adjustment. The request is filed by Michael Finn. The owners of record are Michael and Elizabeth Finn.

Davis reviewed a request for a conditional use permit for a bed and breakfast at 116 Knutson Drive. Davis said the applicant planned to host up to six guests in three rooms. Guests were to be picked up by the applicant/owner and would stay only one night per week in the summers. Applicant Mike Finn said that the guests were to be clients for his son's charter business.

No public comment was received and the commission did not deliberate prior to voting on the motion.

M/Riley-S/Alderson moved to approve the request for a conditional use permit for a bed and breakfast at 116 Knutson Drive in the R-2 multifamily residential district. The property was also known as Lot Seventeen A (17A), Knutson Subdivision Phase III Lot Line Adjustment. The request was filed by Michael Finn. The owners of record were Michael and Elizabeth Finn. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M/Riley-S/Alderson moved to adopt the required findings for conditional use permits as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

D [MISC 25-13](#)

Review and recommendation of a municipal petition to the State of Alaska's Alcoholic Beverage Control Board to increase the number of restaurant and eating place licenses in Sitka.

Ainslie presented a memo to the commission regarding a draft resolution to be approved by the Assembly petitioning the State of Alaska Alcoholic Beverage Control Board for three additional Restaurant and Eating Place Licenses (REPLs). As was,

Sitka had eight REPLs, two of which were seasonal licenses. REPLs were only be available to "bona fide restaurants" and only applied to "brewed beverages and wine." The petition to request for more licenses was permitted given that state law required visitor and nonresident numbers to be considered alongside resident population numbers. With the proposed petition requesting three additional licenses, one REPL would serve around 61,000 people, including visitors. Ainslie noted that among Alaska communities that had requested additional REPLs and received them, this was by far the lowest ratio of REPL-to-person ratio.

The Assembly was to again consider the resolution and petition at its October 28 meeting. Ainslie explained that the commission was being asked to consider the resolution, and specifically the adequacy of community and economic growth to warrant an increase of REPLs, public health and safety concerns associated with additional REPLs, economic impacts associated with additional REPLs, consistency of the petition with the Comprehensive Plan, and any other considerations the Assembly should make in determining whether to move forward with the petition.

The commission asked whether a third seasonal REPL could be requested from the state. It was determined that this was a possibility. Ainslie clarified that seasonal licenses could only operate for six months of the year. Ainslie said the license filing fee with the state was \$1500 or \$2000 and that no further price was paid by recipients, but that licenses were resold at "market rate," which seemed to transfer for "tens of thousands" of dollars. Ainslie noted that more money was typically paid for full liquor licenses than for REPLs.

Michelle Kavouras, Patricia MacPike, Luke Bruckert, Mary Magnuson, Peter Menendez, and Christian Litten all spoke under public comment. Letters from Stan Filler and Amy Zanuzoski were read into the record. Kavouras, MacPike, Magnuson, Menendez, Filler, and Zanuzoski were opposed to the petition for additional REPLs. Bruckert and Litten were in favor of the petition and identified themselves as business owners interested in acquiring REPLs for their eating establishments.

Those opposed cited public health, competition, and the devaluation of existing licenses as reasons to against recommendation of the petition. Those opposed also said that police presence was not robust enough to appropriately respond to an increased number of REPLs. Those in favor said the additional licenses would not meaningfully contribute to competition with liquor licenses--which were held by some public commenters--or increased rates of alcohol abuse.

During deliberation, the commission said it felt that the population numbers shown supported the petition and that additional REPLs could support local economic growth of year-round restaurants. Commissioner Riley said that she had spoken with the police chief about the health impacts of REPLs, and that the chief had said the biggest public health concern regarding the consumption of alcohol was not establishments that held REPLs or even bars, but package stores that allowed people to "take liquor home."

The commission requested the Assembly ask the state to give deference to REPL applicants who owned year-round, local businesses, should the state grant additional REPLs. Following the vote, Ainslie said that this recommendation would be routed through the city's legal department before it was returned to the Assembly.

M/Alderson-S/Riley moved to recommend approval of Resolution 2025-11A, petitioning the Alaska State Alcoholic Beverage Control Board to issue up to three additional restaurant and eating place licenses (REPLs) in Sitka, with the

addition that established, year-round businesses be prioritized in cases of mutually exclusive, i.e. competing applications. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

E [MISC 25-15](#)

Recommendation of the Sitka Historic Preservation Plan.

Will introduced the draft Sitka Historic Preservation Plan, which she explained had been approved by the Historic Preservation Commission on August 13. The next steps were for the plan to receive recommendation from the Planning Commission before forwarding to the Assembly for approval and adoption. Will said the plan was part of the Historic Preservation Commission's duties as outlined in Sitka General Code, and said the body had not updated the plan since 1994. She explained the plan's contents and read through the plan's goals and actions. She also explained the public process the plan had undergone, including a recent public input meeting and feedback from Sitka Tribe of Alaska's Cultural Resources Committee.

The Planning Commission asked how the plan related to its goals. Will and Ainslie explained the concept of adaptive reuse to the commission and how the continued use of a building allowed for its preservation, which related to Planning Commission goals and actions. Ainslie said that the goals of both commissions were largely intertwined, including the use of legal nonconforming structures and certain rezoning efforts.

No public comment was received.

M/Alderson-S/Frank moved to recommend Assembly approval of the Sitka Historic Preservation Plan. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Windsor adjourned the meeting at 9:18 p.m.