



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

Planning and Community Development Department

AGENDA ITEM:

Case No: VAR 26-05
Proposal: Reduction in minimum lot width and size
Applicant: Randy Hughey for Sitka Community Land Trust
Owner: Sitka Community Development Corporation (Sitka Community Land Trust)
Location: 1306 Halibut Point Road
Legal: Lot Two (2), Little Critter Highlands Subdivision
Zone: R-2 Multifamily Residential District
Size: 28,266 SF
Parcel ID: 1-47407-001
Existing Use: Vacant, undeveloped, parking for Su's Heeni Shaak Subdivision
Adjacent Use: Residential
Utilities: Mills Street, Halibut Point Road
Access: Mills Street, Halibut Point Road

KEY POINTS AND CONCERNS:

- The goal is to create a developable parcel for housing
- Sitka General Code sets minimum lot width in the R-2 zone at 80' and minimum lot size in at 6,000 SF
- Proposal is for a minor subdivision resulting in three lots

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Aerial
Attachment B: Current Plat
Attachment C: Proposed Preliminary Plat
Attachment D: Photos
Attachment E: Applicant Materials
Attachment F: Public Comment

BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The applicant is proposing to subdivide the approximately 28,266-square-foot (SF) parcel at 1306 Halibut Point Road to result in three lots. The development standards for the R-2 multifamily residential district require lots be 6,000 square feet net of access easements and a minimum of 80 feet wide. The lot size of Lot 2C is substandard for the zone, as is the lot width of all three resultant lots. The lot sizes and widths are listed below:

- Lot 2A: 6,109 SF; 46.9 feet wide
- Lot 2B: 18,109 SF; 43.60 feet wide
- Lot 2C: 4,021 SF; 53.15 feet wide

R-2 Zoning, Lot Size and Lot Width

1306 Halibut Point Road is zoned R-2 multifamily residential district. Sitka General Code (SGC) 22.20-1 requires a minimum lot size of 6,000 square feet and minimum lot width at 80 feet in the R-2 zone.

ANALYSIS:

Lot Width

A lot's width is "the horizontal distance separating side lot lines of an individual lot" (SGC 22.05.970). It is Planning Office procedure generally to interpret lot width as the length of a parcel's front lot line.

Notably, the lot to be subdivided is strange in shape. It cumulatively has more than 80 feet of lot frontage along Halibut Point Road, however the two horizontal distances abutting Halibut Point Road (i.e. the widths of Lots 2B and 2C) do not share typical side property lines and have both been previously platted at under 80 feet. It is unclear whether the cumulative frontage was interpreted as the lot's width, or if this was an oversight during consideration of past subdivision actions. In any case, the dimensions of these two individual lot lines will remain functionally unchanged under the proposed subdivision action.

The lot width of Lot 2A is constrained by the shape of its parent parcel; there is no opportunity to increase lot width without requiring the applicant to acquire additional land from a neighboring property, or by requiring the applicant to plat a flag-shaped lot which the code discourages (SGC 22.05.850) and would not substantively increase buildable area. Additionally, at 46.9 feet, this lot's width is consistent with those in the rest of the SCLT development which range from approximately 38 feet – 54 feet.

Lot Size

A variance for lot size would be required for Lot 2C, which is substandard at 4,021 SF. It is currently developed with a driveway from Halibut Point Road and is used as a parking area and open space by the SCLT Subdivision. If the applicant did not also own the neighboring property/subdivision, this lot's size would be constrained by previous platting actions. However, given the common ownership, the parcel could be merged with the unsubdivided remainder of Lot 8A of the Su's Heeni Shaak Subdivision, which is also used for parking, and meet district minimum standards. Additionally, if the Commission wishes to see parking for Lot 2A provided in the SCLT development, the easement on Lot 2C would need to be redesignated as a pedestrian

access easement as well as utility easement; this would result in a smaller net lot size than 4,021 SF.

Comprehensive Plan: This platting variance supports the Comprehensive Plan Housing goal: *Expand the range, affordability, and quality of housing in Sitka while maintaining attractive, livable neighborhoods* by enabling development of land in a residentially zoned area, and by increasing the efficiency of the parcel in question. It also supports Action H 1.1e. *Encourage higher density development.*

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the platting variances decreasing minimum lot width for the proposed Lots 2A and 2B. Staff does not recommend approval of the platting variances related to Lot 2C as district minimums for both width and size could be met by merging Lot 2C with Lot 8A which already function as one area to provide access, parking, and waste collection.

RECOMMENDED MOTIONS

- 1) **“I move to approve the platting variance reducing minimum lot width from 80 to 43 feet to enable a subdivision resulting in two lots at 1306 Halibut Point Road in the R-2 multifamily residential district. The property is also known as Lot Two (2), Little Critter Highlands Subdivision. The request is filed by Randy Hughey for Sitka Community Land Trust. The owner of record is Sitka Community Development Corporation (Sitka Community Land Trust).”**

Conditions of Approval

- a. This platting variance is subject to future Planning Commission approval of the preliminary plat for a minor subdivision (case file P 26-01). Approval of this platting variance shall not be construed as de facto approval of the proposed Mills Street Subdivision.
 - b. The preliminary plat to be submitted shall be consistent with the plans, narratives, and other statement(s) of intent by the applicant for the subdivision action.
 - c. This platting variance is granted to enable subdivision of this lot into no more than two lots.
 - d. Substantial progress by the applicant, such as submission of a preliminary plat prepared by a licensed survey for Planning Commission review and approval, must be made within one year of the platting variance approval or the approval becomes void. In the event it can be documented that other substantial progress has been made, a one-year extension may be granted by the Planning Director if a request is filed within eleven months of the initial approval.
- 2) **“I move to adopt the findings required for platting variances as listed in the staff report.”**
A variance from the requirements of SGC Title 21, Subdivisions, may be granted only if the Planning Commission finds the following¹:

¹ Section 21.50.010—Requirements for platting variances.

- a. The granting of a platting variance will not be detrimental to the public safety or welfare, or injurious to the adjacent property *because the variance does not meaningfully alter or inhibit the usable space on any of the resultant lots; and*
- b. The tract to be subdivided is of such unusual size and shape or topographical conditions that the strict application of the requirements of this title will result in undue and substantial hardship to the owner of the property *because it will hinder intuitive development of an already challenging property, and because the variance merely recognizes the unusual size, shape, and topography of the tract to be subdivided without creating unnecessarily substandard parcels.*