



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Darrell Windsor (Chair), Katie Riley (telephonic, left at 7:53 PM), Stacy Mudry, Wendy Alderson, Robin Sherman, Chris Ystad (Alternate Assembly liaison).

Excused: Thor Christianson (Assembly liaison)

Staff: Amy Ainslie, Kim Davis

Public: Kris Calvin, Peter Weiland, Casey and Emily Demmert, Ariadna Will

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

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 24-06](#) Approve the May 1, 2024 meeting minutes.

M/Alderson-S/Mudry moved to approve the May 1, 2024 meeting minutes.

Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

Kris Calvin provided an update and timeline involving the request to vacate Neva Street. The project had faced various obstacles including objections from an electrical department and an abutting neighbor, which had been worked out. Calvin had requested the planning commission's guidance on next steps to move forward with the request.

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie informed commissioners she would be out of town on June 19th and that meeting may be canceled. The July 3rd meeting would be canceled as well.

VI. REPORTS

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

B [CUP 24-04](#) Public hearing and consideration of a conditional use permit for an accessory dwelling unit at 1507 Davidoff Street in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district. The property is also known as Lot 4, Block 10, U.S. Survey No. 3303B, Northwest Addition to the Townsite of Sitka. The request is filled

by Peter Weiland. The owner of record is Rebecca Himschoot.

Ainslie introduced a request for a conditional use permit for an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) at 1507 Davidoff Street in the R-1 single-family or duplex residential district. The lot was 11,200 square feet (SF) with a 1,798 SF duplex. The proposed two-story structure was a little over 800 SF included a garage and laundry room on the first floor, and a one bedroom and one bath dwelling unit on the second floor. The overall height was 24' 10.5', higher than the primary dwelling on the property, this was to be address under VAR 24-08. There were two ADU requirements that were not able to be met by the proposal making it a conditional use, 1) the parcel contains a duplex, and 14) an increase in height over the existing principal dwelling unit. The proposed ADU was on a municipal maintained right-of-way served by utilities and had six parking spaces available on the property. Staff recommended approval.

Commissioners discussion included adding the laundry room as living space. The applicant Peter Weiland was present, he had no additional details to add. There was no additional commissioner discussion and no public comment.

M/Mudry-S/Alderson moved to approve the conditional use permit for an accessory dwelling unit at 1507 Davidoff Street in the R-1-single-family/duplex residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 4, Block 10, U.S. Survey No. 3303B, Northwest Addition to the Townsite of Sitka. The request was filed by Peter Weiland. The owner of record was Rebecca Himschoot. Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.

M/Mudry-S/Alderson moved to adopt and approve the required findings for conditional use permits as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.

C [VAR 24-08](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a variance request to increase the height of an accessory dwelling unit to 25 feet at 1507 Davidoff Street in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district. The property is also known as Lot 4, Block 10, U.S. Survey No 3303B, Northwest Addition to the Townsite of Sitka. The request is filed by Peter Weiland. The owner of record is Rebecca Himschoot.

Ainslie introduced a variance request for an increase in height for an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) at 1507 Davidoff Street in the R-1 single-family or duplex residential district. The structure would be 25' square feet (SF) and the existing primary dwelling unit was at 18' SF. The owner wished to use more vertical space and build both a garage and ADU. This structure was setback far enough from the front property line for no concerns with visibility or shading of other properties. No view sheds would be impacted and there were other two-story structures on this side of the street. Properties across the street were at higher elevations. Staff recommended approval.

The applicant Peter Weiland was present. He had no additional information to add. Commissioners discussed granting a variance for a view shed. Staff clarified the garage was the substantial property right, not the view shed. The variance request was justified due to the special circumstance of the existing structure's placement on the property. There was no public comment and commissioners had no further discussion.

M/Alderson-S/Mudry moved to approve the zoning variance for increased height of an accessory dwelling unit at 1507 Davidoff Street in the R-1-single-family/duplex residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 4, Block 10, U.S. Survey No. 3303B, Northwest Addition to the Townsite of Sitka. The request was filed by

Peter Weiland. The owner of record was Rebecca Himschoot. Motion pass 5-0 by voice vote.

M/Alderson-S/Mudry moved to adopt and approve the required findings for variances involving major structures or expansions as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.

D [CUP 24-05](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 101 Thomas Young Sr Circle in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district. The property is also known as Lot Five (5), Kaasda Heen Shaak Subdivision. The request is filled by Emily and Casey Demmert. The owners of record are Casey and Emily Demmert Revocable Trust.

Windsor disclosed he had been working at this property and asked to be excused from the item. Commissioners agreed and Riley became Acting Chair.

Ainslie introduced a request for a conditional use permit for a short-term rental (STR) at 101 Thomas Young Sr. Circle in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district. This was the applicants primary residence. The STR was a one-bedroom apartment above the garage with a maximum capacity of two guests. This property was a corner lot, that was well buffered and had adequate parking for four vehicles. Staff recommended approval.

The applicants Emily and Casey Demmert were present, they had no additional information to add. Sherman asked if this apartment had been a long-term rental, applicants confirmed. Commissioners discussed the loss of long-term rentals and the increased cost of living. They suggested to add more garbage handling instructions and bear awareness since this area of town was an active location for bears. Commissioners suggested staff create language for applicants to use in the renter handout. There was no public comment and commissioners had no additional discussions.

M/Alderson-S/Mudry moved to approve the conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 101 Thomas Young Sr. Circle in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot Five (5), Kaasda Heen Shaak Subdivision. The request was filed by Casey and Emily Demmert. The owners of record were Casey and Emily Demmert Revocable Trust. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M/Alderson-S/Mudry 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.

E [MISC 24-06](#)

Discussion on interpretations of conditional use permits allowing variances.

Ainslie introduced a discussion item on variances associated with conditional use permits. The current process was to approve both separately but there was a section of code where commissioners could reduce or modify bulk requirements, off-street parking, and design use standards under conditional use permits. Staff had wanted some guidance from commissioners. Windsor had questions on the appeal process and how denials would work. Ainslie stated an appeal which was reviewed by the Assembly could be confusing, since it would be removing the condition of approval. Reviewing them separately could be the better option. The commission took no action on the item.

F [MISC 24-08](#) Discussion on waste disposal costs associated with housing development.

Ainslie introduced a discussion on waste disposal costs as it related to housing. One of the barriers to removing or renovating existing structures was the cost of debris disposal. Commissioners stated interest in offsetting costs or creating subsidies for affordable housing that was not passed off to taxpayers. Commissioners also discussed incentives for property owners to keep long-term rents low. Commissioners took no action on the item.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Windsor adjourned the meeting at 8:40 PM.