



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Darrell Windsor (Chair), Katie Riley, Wendy Alderson, Stacy Mudry, Thor Christianson (Assembly liaison)
Excused: Robin Sherman
Staff: Amy Ainslie, Kim Davis
Public: Kris Calvin, Christine Harrington, Janet Love, Peter Hagen, Lucas Goddard, Len Kola, Jon Swanson, Rachel Jones, Marge Strand, Garry White, Roger Hames, Tripp LaRose

Chair Windsor called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 24-09](#) Approve the July 25, 2024 meeting minutes.

**M/Mudry-S/Alderson moved to approve the July 25, 2024 meeting minutes.
Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.**

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie reported the 201 Price Street rezone had passed the Assembly and the minor subdivision would be forthcoming. The first review for the Tourism Manager position would be August 15 and the Planner I position would be posted soon. The Sitka Housing Network meeting was scheduled for August 12th. This group was involved with housing-related initiatives and Commissioners were invited to attend.

VI. REPORTS

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

B [LM 23-03](#) Commission review and recommendation of a proposal to vacate a portion of the Neva Street right-of-way segment between Davidoff Street and Edgumbe Drive. The property is also known as the Neva Street Right-of-Way, Blocks 6 and 7, U.S. Survey 3303 B, Northwest Addition. The request is filed by Kris Calvin. The owner of record is the City and Borough of Sitka.

Ainslie introduced a request to vacate a portion of Neva Street between Blocks 6 and 7 from Davidoff Street to Edgecumbe Drive. This was an undeveloped municipal right-of-way (ROW), 60' wide and 337' long. The ROW was unsuitable for water or wastewater and was not suitable to be developed as a street. There would be a 20' easement for future electric and communication lines, which would straddle the property line with 10' on each side. The ROW would only be vacated to the southern boundary of Lot 7 to preserve adequate space to turnaround on Davidoff Street. All adjacent property owners were supportive of the request and staff recommended approval.

The applicant Kris Calvin was present. He had nothing else to add but was in process of getting an encroachment permit to place a driveway off Edgecumbe Drive and all electric had been removed from the ROW. Public comment from Christine Harrington regarding driveway safety concerns had been addressed and the driveway would be placed on Calvin's side of the vacation. Harrington asked about the process to vacate the alley was between her property and the Welsh's property. Staff confirmed it would be a separate process. Public comment from Peter Hagen was about where the utility easement would be placed. Staff confirmed 10' on each side of the center line. He also asked about fences on easements. Staff stated nothing should be built on the easement and a fence could be installed adjacent to the easement. A letter read into public comment from Janet Love had two concerns, to preserve turn around access at Davidoff Street and Neva Street and possible pedestrian access to Edgecumbe Drive through Neva Street in the event of a natural disaster.

Commissioners discussed the proposal to vacate a portion of Neva Street reviewing the where the new utility easement would be placed and the new driveway from Edgecumbe Drive. Staff confirmed the request would go to the Assembly on August 27th for approval to draft the ordinance to sell the vacated portion to the adjacent property owners and to set a sale price. Staff also confirmed for commissioners that if everything was approved, a replat would come back before them and new corner markers would be set.

M/Alderson-S/Mudry moved to recommend approval of the vacation of Neva Street, an undeveloped municipal right-of-way between Edgecumbe Drive and Davidoff Street. The property was also known as Frank Street between Blocks 6 and 7, U.S. Survey No. 3303 B, Northwest Addition. The request was filed by Kris Calvin. The owner of record was City and Borough of Sitka. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

C [VAR 24-12](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a zoning variance to reduce the front setback from 14 feet to 10 feet at 4602 Halibut Point Road in the C-2 general commercial mobile home district. The property is also known as Lot 2, Magee Subdivision. The request is filed by Lucas Goddard. The owner of record is Goddard Enterprises.

Davis introduced a variance request to reduce the front setback from 14' to 10' at 4602 Halibut Point Road (HPR) in the C-2 general commercial mobile home district. The applicant had proposed to build a 10'x24' addition to an existing garage to create a small single family home. There was an existing RV park on the property with two RV's used as short-tem rentals. The property was accessed via a 20' wide access easement over Lot 1 (4600 HPR) and a portion of the access easement straddles both properties. There was a plat note restriction requiring the access easement to be upgraded to accommodate two lanes of traffic if commercial uses of Lot 2 required more than four off-street parking spaces. Staff measured the access easement at 16'. The dwelling unit required two parking spaces and the zoning code did not specify parking

regulations for RV park's or like uses. Special circumstances included the topography of the lot and the placement of the existing structure. Staff recommended approval and recommended the commission determine whether more than four parking spaces were required for the proposed uses of the property and if upgrades to the access easement were required.

The applicant Lucas Goddard was present and stated that one car per RV was more than enough to serve each of the small RV's in the park. Construction of the dwelling unit would be for future family use. There was no public comment. The commission discussed potential future uses of commercial zones and the need for adequate parking. They concluded that two parking spaces would be required for the dwelling and one for the RV park. They noted any changes to the use of the property would require a review for adequate parking.

M/Mudry-S/Riley moved to approve the zoning variance for a reduction to the front setback at 4602 Halibut Point Road in the C-2-general commercial and mobile home district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 2, Magee Subdivision. The request was filed by Lucas Goddard. The owner of record was Goddard Enterprises. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M/Mudry-S/Riley moved to adopt and approve the required findings for variances involving major structures or expansions as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

D [CUP 22-14](#)

Public hearing and consideration of an amendment to a conditional use permit (CUP 22-14) for five short-term rentals at 505 Sawmill Creek Road in the R-2 multifamily residential district. The property is also known as Lots 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14, Block 20, Sitka Townsite, U.S. Survey 1474, Tract A. The request is filed by Rachel Jones. The owner of record is Cortona Holdings, LLC.

Ainslie introduced a request to amend conditional use permit 22-14 for five short-term rentals (STR) at 505 Sawmill Creek Road, to extend the initiation period for 18-months. The project had been updated for the schoolroom portion of the building to be three stories rather than four and the sanctuary space would remain two stories rather than three. Additional units had been added for a total of 18 dwelling units. The project had made progress with a geological study and foundation structural plans at 100%, above-ground structural, mechanical, and electrical plans were at 65%. Applicants had delayed construction due to a grant opportunity offered through Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC). The project was financially feasible without the grant funding but with it more units could be offered to low-income households. Staff recommended approval of the request to extend the initiation period.

The applicants Len Kola, Jon Swanson, Rachel Jones were present. They were wanting to provide affordable workforce housing. They had met with neighbors about the project and community members about housing needs. They outlined their plans for the five STR's and to increase the number of long-term rentals with the aim of providing low-income units if they could secure public subsidy. Jones clarified there were three scenarios; building market-rate condos, building affordable long-term rentals, or building long-term rentals with public subsidy, all with the supporting financing from the five STR's. They confirmed there were currently long-term renters in the building.

Public comment from Marge Strand, a neighbor, expressing support for the project. Garry White from Sitka Economic Development Association also spoke in favor of the project, emphasizing the need for workforce housing to support local business. Roger

Hames was also in support of the project. A letter read into the record from Trip LaRose, a neighbor and former owner, was also in support.

Commissioners discussed the project and the parking with the additional dwelling units added. Staff confirmed there were a few additional parking spaces in the back lot and parking would be conformed before the building permit was issued. Commissioners asked for additional clarification on the grant requirements. Staff reported AHFC would require a deed restriction to be placed on the property for either 20 or 30 years to ensure the units would stay affordable.

M/Riley-S/Mudry moved to amend CUP 22-14, a conditional use permit for five short-term rentals at 505 Sawmill Creek Road, to extend the initiation period by 18-months, thereby requiring activity under the permit to be initiated by January 30, 2026. The property was also known as Lots 10, 11, 12, 12, and 14, Block 20, Sitka Townsite, U.S. Survey 1474 Tract A. The application was filed by Rachel Jones. The owner of record was Cortona Holding, LLC.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Windsor adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.