



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

Planning and Community Development Department

AGENDA ITEM

Case No: CUP 26-15
Proposal: Request for Food Truck Lot
Applicant: Drew Wilson
Owner: Drew Wilson
Location: 328 Lincoln Street
Legal: Lot One (1), Columbia Bar Subdivision
Zone: CBD - Central Business District
Size: 6,249 Square feet
Parcel ID: 1-0325-000
Existing Use: Vacant Building (future distillery CUP 25-13), Food Trucks (CUPs 24-12 and 25-12)
Adjacent Use: Retail, Arcade, Bank, Public Library, Harrigan Centennial Hall
Utilities: Existing
Access: Harbor Drive

KEY POINTS AND CONCERNS

- Location has been used for food trucks since 2024
- Proposed food truck lot to operate during business hours and with municipal power source
- Recommendation for approval contingent upon prior permit deactivation/closure

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Aerial
Attachment B: Plat
Attachment C: Site Plan
Attachment D: Photos
Attachment E: Applicant Materials

BACKGROUND/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The property owner is requesting a conditional use permit (CUP) for the operation of a food truck lot at 328 Lincoln Street. The property has one active CUP for a food truck (CUP 25-12 for Ashmo's). Another CUP for a food truck has been removed from the property by the owner and applicant (CUP 24-12 for Thai Alaska Kitchen). A CUP for distillery manufacturing has been approved but is not active at this time (CUP 25-13).

Should the request for a food truck lot be approved, the property owner must deactivate the existing food truck permit for Ashmo's. More information regarding layout at the property is provided under item i. under analysis.

Footnote 8 to SGC Table 22.16.015-6, "Retail and Business Uses" has the follow provisions for temporary structures/food vending in the Central Business District (CBD): *"Kiosks, outdoor restaurants, portable structures such as food stands and other temporary structures that are clearly incidental to the primary use on the lot are permitted uses. Mobile food carts on wheels are permitted uses on private property. Kiosks, outdoor restaurants, portable structures such as food stands and other temporary structures that are not clearly incidental to the primary use on the lot are conditional uses."*

The interpretation and application of this code provision has been to consistently require CUPs for food trucks or food trailers from which food is prepared and/or served from the inside of the unit, operating on private property in the CBD. This is differentiated from food carts which one stands behind to prepare and serve food from; this is a permitted use on private property in the CBD.

ANALYSIS

1. CRITERIA TO BE USED IN DETERMINING THE IMPACT OF CONDITIONAL USES.¹

a. Amount of vehicular traffic to be generated and impacts of the traffic on nearby land uses:

Minimal increase in vehicular traffic is expected as food trucks often draw more foot traffic than vehicular traffic. Moderate to high levels of traffic are expected in the CBD.

b. Amount of noise to be generated and its impacts on surrounding land use: Some additional noise from customers expected, however this is already a high customer/pedestrian use area which is to be expected in the CBD. The proposed business hours are from 9am to 9pm and is consistent with many businesses currently in the area. The food trucks will be connected to municipal power, eliminating the need for (and noise of) a generator.

¹ § 22.24.010.E

c. Odors to be generated by the use and their impacts: Some odors are expected as food will be prepared in the trucks. Cooking fumes will pass through hood ventilation and a filtration system. Food/cooking odors are expected in the CBD. Property owner providing large trash can.

d. Hours of operation: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., up to seven days a week.

e. Location along a major or collector street: The building fronts Lincoln Street, but all food truck activity will be in the back parking lot where access is from Harbor Drive, a state-maintained and arterial right-of-way.

f. Potential for users or clients to access the site through residential areas or substandard street creating a cut-through traffic scenario: There are multiple routes to the downtown area, some of which go through residential areas. It is expected that most people will use Harbor Drive.

g. Effects on vehicular and pedestrian safety: There may be more pedestrians in this area as a result of more food trucks. There are sidewalks in this area on both sides of Harbor Drive. Further, the placement of the food trucks inside a private parking lot gets pedestrians out of the right-of-way and into a safer area to form a queue.

There has also been tremendous concern from the public with congestion downtown on large cruise passenger days and the resulting impacts to pedestrian safety. Of main concern in this area are the pedestrians who jaywalk across Harbor Drive from Harrigan Centennial Hall. CBS has been working with the State of Alaska Department of Transportation to address pedestrian safety issues along Harbor Drive and is actively recruiting pedestrian safety attendants to guide traffic and monitoring pedestrian and vehicular movement in the downtown area on days with significant cruise ship visitation. It is notable that food trucks have been operating on this property during the last two visitor season without known incident.

h. Ability of the police, fire, and EMS personnel to respond to emergency calls on the site: Site is accessible for police, fire and EMS response.

i. Logic of the internal traffic layout: The owner plans to have three vendor spaces available on the property for the operation of a food truck lot. The property is platted as about 56' on the north property line, 89' on the west property line, 92' on the east property line and 42' on the south property line.

- Vendor I – 10' x 40'
- Vendor II – 10' x 29'
- Vendor III – 10' x 29'

Vendor I, will be placed perpendicular with the back of the distillery building and Flipside Arcade. It is assumed that most food trucks will not need the 40' in length, all current food trucks in town are under 30'. Vendor II will be positioned parallel to the unnamed one-way alley which is also used by First National Bank of Alaska for their drive-up window. The serving window will face the interior of the lot to prevent a pedestrian queue from forming in the alley. Vendor III, will be placed

parallel to Harbor Drive. All food trucks shall be placed to meet fire separation requirements. On-street parking will be available; there are no off-street parking requirements in the central business district.

j. Effects of signage on nearby uses: No additional signage is proposed. Food trucks may be branded with the business name/company logo on the side of the truck. All signs shall comply with Sitka General Code.

k. Presence of existing or proposed buffers on the site or immediately adjacent the site: Adjacent to other buildings. High density and commercial use is expected in the CBD.

l. Relationship if the proposed conditional use is in a specific location to the goals, policies, and objectives of the comprehensive plan: Conforms to the chapter of Economic Development that supports local businesses, attracts new sustainable businesses, and supports effort and enterprises that keep residents' money "local" and ED 6.5, "*support growth of Sitka's independent, cruise-related, and heritage tourism work and enterprises.*"

m. Other criteria that surface through public comments or planning commission review: None.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the conditional use permit for a food truck lot at 328 Lincoln Street subject to the attached conditions of approval.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. Permit and use shall comply with all local regulations, including building code, fire and life safety, business registration, and remittance of all applicable taxes.
2. All required permits, including but not limited to DEC Food Safety and Sanitation, shall be current at all times when the conditional use permit is utilized.
3. Operations shall not obstruct safe pedestrian paths within the lot or sidewalk.
4. Within one month of permit activation, Planning Department staff will evaluate the placement of the food trucks and associated pedestrian queuing and driver visibility impacts; the applicant may be required to adjust their site plan contingent upon the results of said evaluation.
5. The food truck shall be located per SGC 22.20-1, 16 which requires a five-foot setback to any property lines abutting a public street, alley, or deed access easement.
6. The facility shall be operated consistent with the application, narrative, and plans that were submitted with the request.
7. The Planning Commission, at its discretion and upon receipt of meritorious complaint, may schedule a public hearing at any time for the purpose of resolving issues with the request and mitigating adverse impacts on nearby properties.

MOTION IN FAVOR OF APPROVAL

- 1. “I move to approve the conditional use permit for a food truck lot at 328 Lincon Street in the Central Business District, subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property is also known as Lot One (1), Columbia Bar Subdivision. The request is filed by Drew Wilson. The owner of record is Drew Wilson.”**
- 2. “I move to adopt and approve the required findings for conditional use permits as listed in the staff report.”**

The Planning Commission shall not approve a proposed development unless it first makes the following findings and conclusions:²

1. The granting of the proposed conditional use permit will not:
 - a. Be detrimental to the public health, safety, and general welfare;
 - b. Adversely affect the established character of the surrounding vicinity; nor
 - c. Be injurious to the uses, property, or improvements adjacent to, and in the vicinity of, the site upon which the proposed use is to be located; *because the proposed use is consistent with the intent of the zoning district, character of the surrounding area, and alike to multiple other food service operations in the area.*
2. The granting of the proposed conditional use permit is consistent and compatible with the intent of the goals, objectives, and policies of the comprehensive plan and any implementing regulation; *because it promotes economic development by providing an opportunity for entrepreneurship, supports local business, and promotes locally made products. It's also compatible to ED 6.5, “support growth of Sitka’s independent, cruise-related, and heritage tourism work and enterprises.”*
3. All conditions necessary to lessen any impacts of the proposed use are conditions that can be monitored and enforced; *conditions can be enforced through State and municipal permitting requirements, municipal code, and conditions provide a means of redress through the Planning Commission.*
4. The proposed use will not introduce hazardous conditions at the site that cannot be mitigated to protect adjacent properties, the vicinity, and the public health, safety and welfare of the community from such hazard; *because the proposed use is similar to and consistent with existing uses in the area. Other safety concerns such as food and fire safety are addressed through other permitting processes.*
5. The conditional use will be supported by, and not adversely affect, adequate public facilities and services; or that conditions can be imposed to lessen any adverse impacts on such facilities and services; *there are adequate public facilities such as utilities and streets in the area that can support the additional use.*
6. Burden of proof; *the applicant has met the burden of proof to demonstrate that the use is appropriate for the zoning district, the character of the neighborhood, and not hazardous or detrimental to the surrounding area.*

² §22.30.160(C)—Required Findings for Conditional Use Permits