



City and Borough of Sitka

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A Coast Guard City

MEMORANDUM

To: Chair Spivey and Planning Commission Members

From: Amy Ainslie, Planning Director

Date: January 14, 2022

Subject: Site Plan Review for CUP 20-12

Background

On August 5, 2020, the Planning Commission approved CUP 20-12 which was a request by the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) for a new hospital building at (what is now) 227 Tongass Drive. A copy of the staff report and minutes is included for your review. The properties utilized for this developed have been combined into a single lot through a Planning Commission approved lot merger action (P 20-06). The address associated with the conditional use permit is updated as 227 Tongass Drive, and the legal description as Lot 1, SEARHC Subdivision.

At time of approval, the applicant was still in the early stages of designing the new facility meaning that the specifics of the development were not yet available. SEARHC was in the process of securing federal approvals for the hospital development and needed to demonstrate site control including compliance with local zoning requirements. The decision was made to stage approval of this permit into two pieces – the first review provided approval for the general concept of using this location for a hospital, and a second review would provide review and approval of the development plan specifics. This review is intended to fulfill the intent of the second review and fulfill the outstanding condition of approval on the permit.

The CBS Development Review Committee (DRC) comprising Planning, Public Works, Building, Electric, Fire, and Police convened to review the submitted plans.

Analysis

Per the outstanding condition of approval, the following items were required for submission in this site plan review:

- A. Site plan for proposed structures with distances to property lines shown:** This has been provided. The hospital building is oriented on the northern end of the property. The building is set approximately 66' from the front of Tongass Drive, and approximately 51' from Seward Avenue at its closest point. The closest point of the building to the western property line (boarding US Coast Guard housing) is approximately 84'. No encroachments on

required setbacks are indicated.

- B. Elevation view of the exterior of any/all proposed structures:** Elevation views for the building have been rendered and provided. Height of the building is addressed in V 22-01. It is staff's recommendation that if V 22-01 is not approved, consideration of this site plan be postponed until a height and corresponding elevation view is accepted (whether through a new variance application that is approved by the Commission or a building plan that indicates code compliant height).
- C. Floor plans of any/all proposed structures:** High level floor plans were provided that give a sense of the anticipated uses on each floor and anticipated floor space for each use.
- D. Traffic volume and flow analysis:** Overall numbers of anticipated ambulance volumes, patient transport volumes, average outpatient clinic visits, and deliveries are provided.
- Ambulance: 1500/year, about 4/day
 - SEARHC Patient Transport: 53/day
 - Average Outpatient Clinic Visits: 235/day
 - Deliveries
 - Supply chain: Multiple times daily (cargo van)
 - Facilities: Monthly (flat bed/box truck) and weekly fuel truck
 - Housekeeping: Multiple times daily (cargo van)
 - Food Service: 3 times daily (cargo van)
- E. Parking plan:** A parking plan was provided and reviewed by the Commission in conjunction with V 22-02. It is staff's recommendation that if V 22-02 is not approved, consideration of this site plan be postponed until a parking plan is accepted (whether through a new variance application that is approved by the Commission or a parking plan that indicates code compliant parking levels).
- F. Full list of services offered:** This was provided by the applicant and available in the Narrative attachment. Staff did not note any services that appeared inconsistent with conventional hospital services.
- G. Anticipated employee numbers in any/all proposed structures:** The applicant anticipates that a total of 420 employees for hospital, with peak employee count of 140 staff on shift.
- H. Maximum Occupancy of any/all proposed structures:** The Narrative attachment also provides an analysis of gross floor spaces to determine maximum occupancy consistent with building code – maximum occupancy of the hospital is calculated to be 1,623.
- I. Signage plan:** Per the site plan, wayfinding signs are planned for the southern end of parking lot A, two near the ambulance entry, one near the Seward Avenue driveway, and one at the entry of parking lot B. A monument sign is shown at the main entry drive intersecting Tongass Drive. Historical interpretative signs are shown on the southwestern corner of parking lot A, west of the entry drop off loop, and west of the entry of parking lot B. Signs mounted to the top floor of the clinic building are depicted on the north and south faces of the

building (Seward Avenue side and Tongass Drive side respectively).

- J. Buffering to adjacent properties/uses (Coast Guard Housing and MEHS in particular):** Buffering is shown on the site plan with preservation of wetlands and vegetation on the west side of the property.
- K. Location and dimensions of loading berths:** Two loading berths are on the north side of the building with an entrance from Seward Avenue. Loading berth requirements found in SGC 22.20.110(A) are 1 loading berth per 10,000 – 300,000 square feet of floor area. With 189,862 square feet, two loading berths exceed the required minimum. At a minimum, each berth must be at least 10' wide, 25' long, and 14' tall. Berths in the site plan meet these minimums.

The criteria for the conditional use permit that were noted as having incomplete analysis upon first review given lack of site plan details are analyzed below:

- 1. Amount of vehicular traffic to be generated and impacts on the traffic of nearby land uses:** Moderate to heavy traffic is still expected, and this is consistent with currently uses of the property as well as surrounding uses. The property is located along large, publicly maintained rights-of-way that were designed for heavy traffic use. Parking levels as considered under V 22-02 factor into traffic impact of the development.
- 2. Cut through traffic scenarios:** Cut through traffic is unlikely to be generated as the site is accessed via Airport Road and Tongass Drive – there are no other publicly accessible roads to the site. Site plans do not depict any street/driveway development that would allow access through Mt. Edgecumbe High School or the neighboring Coast Guard housing.
- 3. Logic of the internal traffic layout:** Parking lots and driveways are depicted on the site plan. The DRC noted appreciation that plans depicted a cover over the ambulance entry to protect patients from weather as they are transferred into the facility. It was noted that given its proximity and direct site line to Tongass Drive, the lack of screening for patient privacy is a concern. While not required, a sign on the landscaping island around which the ambulance drive wraps could provide this screening as well as provide a windbreak for patient transfers. Staff also noted that given the placement and configuration of access to the front door, there is a fair amount of distance between parking spaces and the front door. Of the five ADA accessible spaces in parking lot A, the closest spot is approximately 170' from the front door. There are no code requirements in terms of distance of parking spaces to entry ways, and the number of code required ADA parking spaces is satisfied. The designed flow for dropping patients off at the front door and then accessing parking appears logical.
- 4. Effects of signage on nearby uses:** No adverse effects are apparent in the signage plan presented, though detail on the size (excepting the historical interpretive signs), design, and features of the signage is not yet available.

With the addition of this information, the Commission must now determine whether the outstanding condition of approval regarding site plan review has been satisfied. If so, staff would also ask that the Commission reaffirm the findings associated with the permit.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Aerial
Attachment B: 2020 Staff Report and Minutes
Attachment C: Site Plan
Attachment D: Narrative
Attachment E: Photos
Attachment F: Plat

Recommended Motions:

“I move that condition of approval number one attached to CUP 20-12 has been satisfied. The restriction on Planning Department approval of the foundation permit as described in condition number two of this permit is hereby lifted. All other conditions attached to the permit remain in effect.”

“I move to adopt the required findings for conditional use permits as listed in the staff report in conjunction with the now completed application for a hospital at 227 Tongass Drive in the Public lands district subject to the modified conditions of approval. The property is also known as Lot 1, SEARHC Subdivision. The request is filed by the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium. The owner of record is the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium.”¹

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.
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,
3. All conditions necessary to lessen any impacts of the proposed use are conditions that can be monitored and enforced.
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.
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.
6. Burden of Proof. The applicant has the burden of proving that the proposed conditional use meets all of the criteria in subsection B of this section.

¹ § 22.30.160.C – Required Findings for Conditional Use Permits