

BOA – HEARING OUTLINE
Conditional Use Permit

- I. **Board of Adjustment** (BOA) - Assembly (*SGC 22.30.060A*)
 - A. Quasi-judicial – avoid *ex parte* contacts
 - B. Authority to approve or deny conditional use permits -*SGC 22.30.060A*¹
 - C. Assembly’s Other Options - *SGC 22.30.170B.1*²
 - 1. Approve Planning Comm’n recommendation
 - 2. Approve with additional conditions
 - 3. Modify with or without applicant’s consent (some limitations)
 - 4. Deny application
 - 5. Remand –
 - a. Issues not covered
 - b. Procedural due process problems (new pertinent evidence)
- II. **Review Criteria**
 - A. Assembly reviews Planning Comm’n recommended decision regarding conditional use permit applications – *SGC 22.30.050F*³

¹ *SGC 22.30.060 Board of adjustment.*

The assembly of the city and borough shall function as the board of adjustment with the authority to:

- A. *Approve or deny conditional use permits.*

* * *

² *SGC 22.30.170 Assembly actions.* (emphasis added)

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B. *Decisions.* *The assembly shall make its decision by motion or ordinance as appropriate.*

1. An assembly decision on a planning commission recommendation or following a public hearing shall include one of the following actions:

a. Approve as recommended.

b. Approve with additional conditions.

c. Modify, with or without the applicant’s concurrence; provided, that the modifications do not:

i. Enlarge the area or scope of the project.

ii. Increase the density or proposed building size.

iii. Significantly increase adverse environmental impacts as determined by the responsible official.

d. Deny (reapplication or resubmittal is permitted).

e. Deny with prejudice (reapplication or resubmittal is not allowed for one year).

f. Remand for further proceedings.

³ *SGC 22.30.050 Planning commission.*

The planning commission shall be constituted in accordance with Chapter 2.18 of this code and the Sitka Home Rule Charter and shall have the responsibility of reviewing and acting on the following:

* * *

B. Planning Comm'n decision and recommendation in this case regarding conditional use permit applications subject to Assembly review

C. Nature of the review by Assembly – review recommended Findings of Fact and General Approval Criteria Considerations and proposed conditions made by Planning Commission regarding each conditional use permit application

1. **FF criteria– All criteria must be met (SGC 22.30.160C)**
 - a. Not detrimental to public health, safety, general welfare;
 - b. Not adversely affect established character of surrounding vicinity;
 - c. Not injurious to uses, property or improvements adjacent to or in vicinity;
 - d. Not inconsistent with Comprehensive Plan;
 - e. Conditions to lessen impacts are monitorable & enforceable
 - f. No hazardous conditions that cannot be mitigated regarding adjacent & vicinity properties ; and
 - g. Not adversely affect public facilities & services, or imposed conditions mitigate impact.

2. **General Approval Criteria Considerations (SGC 22.20.160C)**
 - a. Effects of the conditional use on site (topography, slope and soil stability) and geophysical hazards (flooding, surface and subsurface drainage, water quality);
 - b. Utilities and service requirements (sewers, storm drainage, water, fire protection, access and electrical power);
 - c. Lot or tract characteristics (lot size, yard requirements, lot coverage and height of structures);
 - d. Use characteristics that affect adjacent uses and districts (operating hours; number of persons, traffic, parking and loading, trash and litter removal, exterior lighting, noise, vibration, dust, smoke, heat and humidity, recreation and open space requirements); and
 - e. Community appearance (landscaping, fencing, screening).

3. **Proposed Conditions**

F. Recommendations on conditional use permit applications.

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4. SGC 22.30.160C – Planning Comm’n decision requirements⁴

⁴ *SGC 22.30.160 Planning commission review and recommendation.* (emphasis added)

Planning commission decision and action authority is defined in Section 22.30.050.

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C. Required Findings for Conditional Use Permits. The planning commission shall not recommend approval of a proposed development unless it first makes the following findings and conclusions:

1. The city may use design standards and other elements in this code to modify the proposal. A conditional use permit may be approved only if all of the following findings can be made regarding the proposal and are supported by the record that 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.

The city may approve, approve with conditions, modify, modify with conditions, or deny the conditional use permit. The city may reduce or modify bulk requirements, off-street parking requirements, and use design standards to lessen impacts, as a condition of the granting of the conditional use permit. In considering the granting of a conditional use, the assembly and planning commission shall satisfy themselves that the general criteria set forth for uses specified in this chapter will be met. The city may consider any or all criteria listed and may base conditions or safeguards upon them. The assembly and planning commission may require the applicant to submit whatever reasonable evidence may be needed to protect the public interest. The general approval criteria are as follows:

1. Site topography, slope and soil stability, geophysical hazards such as flooding, surface and subsurface drainage and water quality, and the possible or probable effects of the proposed conditional use upon these factors;

2. Utilities and service requirements of the proposed use, including sewers, storm drainage, water, fire protection, access and electrical power; the assembly and planning commission may enlist the aid of the relevant public utility officials with specialized knowledge in evaluating the probable effects of the proposed use and may consider the costs of enlarging, upgrading or extending public utilities in establishing conditions under which the conditional use may be permitted;

3. Lot or tract characteristics, including lot size, yard requirements, lot coverage and height of structures;

4. Use characteristics of the proposed conditional use that affect adjacent uses and districts, including hours of operation, number of persons, traffic volumes, off-street parking

III. BOA Procedure

A. Packet Review

1. Planning Comm'n FF and motions
2. Planning Comm'n minutes
3. Planning Comm'n record (written submissions)

B. Hearing (SGC 22.30.180)⁵

1. Follow Assembly procedures
2. Order
 - a. Staff
 - b. Applicant
 - c. Public
 - d. Rebuttal
 - i. Staff
 - ii. Applicant
 - e. Close evidentiary hearing -- Deliberate
 - f. Make Findings of Fact & Decision
 - i. Planning Comm'n recommended Findings of Fact and conditions
 - ii. Modify FF and conditions (use *SGC 22.30.160C* criteria)

C. Burden of proof on Applicant (SGC 22.30.160C.6)⁶

and loading characteristics, trash and litter removal, exterior lighting, noise, vibration, dust, smoke, heat and humidity, recreation and open space requirements;

5. *Community appearance such as landscaping, fencing and screening, dependent upon the specific use and its visual impacts.*

⁵ *SGC 22.30.180 Procedures for public hearings.* (emphasis added)

Public hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the hearing body's rules of procedure and shall serve to create or supplement an evidentiary record upon which the body will base its decision. The chair shall open the public hearing and, in general, observe the following sequence of events:

- A. Staff presentation, including submittal of any administrative reports. Members of the hearing body may ask questions of the staff.
- B. Applicant presentation, including submittal of any materials. Members of the hearing body may ask questions of the applicant.
- C. Testimony or comments by the public germane to the matter. Questions directed to the staff or the applicant shall be posed by the chair at its discretion.
- D. Rebuttal, response or clarifying statements by the staff and the applicant.
- E. The evidentiary portion of the public hearing shall be closed and the hearing body shall deliberate on the matter before it.

⁶ *SGC 22.30.160 Planning commission review and recommendation.* (emphasis added)

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D. Assembly Options – See Section I.B above

IV. Actions after Assembly Decision

A. Remand - SGC 22.30.200⁷

B. Reconsideration - SGC 22.30.190⁸

C. Judicial Appeal (Superior Court – Sitka) - SGC 22.30.240A⁹

C. *Required Findings for Conditional Use Permits. The planning commission shall not recommend approval of a proposed development unless it first makes the following findings and conclusions:*

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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.*

⁷ SGC 22.30.200 Remand.

In the event the assembly determines that the public hearing record or record on appeal is insufficient or otherwise flawed, the assembly may remand the matter back to the hearing body. The assembly shall specify the items or issues to be considered and the time frame for completing the additional work. The assembly may hold a public hearing on a closed record appeal only for the limited purposes identified in the remand.

⁸ SGC 22.30.190 Reconsideration.

A party to a public hearing or closed record appeal may seek reconsideration only of a final decision by filing a written request for reconsideration with the administrator within fourteen calendar days of the oral announcement of the final decision. The assembly shall consider the request at its next regularly scheduled meeting. If the request is denied, the previous action shall become final. If the request is granted, the assembly body may immediately revise and reissue its decision or may call for argument in accordance with the procedures for closed record appeals.

⁹ SGC 22.30.240 Judicial appeal.

A. *Appeals from the final decision of the assembly, or other city board or body involving Title 21 SGC, and for which all other appeals specifically authorized have been timely exhausted, shall be made to superior court within thirty days of the date the decision or action became final, unless another time period is established by state law or local ordinance.*

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