



City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street • Sitka, Alaska 99835

Coast Guard City, USA

Memorandum

To: Chair Spivey and Planning Commission
Through: Amy Ainslie, Director, Planning and Community Development
From: Scott Brylinsky, Planning Department Consultant 
Subject: Discussion/Direction on Tiny-Houses-on-Chassis as ADU's
Date: December 11, 2019

Background

The Assembly's strategy for economic development includes a component to pursue options regarding tiny homes and/or small dwellings. That action plan¹ identifies the Planning Commission as the steering body for this effort.

The overall goal of the plan is to pursue options regarding "tiny homes" and/or smaller dwellings. This memo is to put forth for discussion one specific proposal: **to allow tiny-houses-on-chassis² as accessory dwelling units.**

Discussion

Provisions for Accessory Dwelling Units were developed and put into code several years ago. The intent was to create an option for increasing the number of affordable housing units. For a variety of reasons, ADU's have not seen as broad use as hoped. Those reasons include the significant expense to construct the permanent foundation that is required by current code. At the time provisions for ADU's were first adopted, there was widespread agreement that the community did not want to see recreational vehicles used as ADU's.

An overall outcome of ordinance changes being proposed is to create in local code the option of "tiny-house-on-chassis", neither an RV nor a permanent dwelling, that can be legally occupied in a variety of places, including as ADU's.

Additional details of this specific proposal include:

- The tiny house on chassis could be installed with or without wheels in place. It would require skirting to cover the chassis and wheels.

¹ Plan was developed, but not formally adopted, by the Assembly.

² A tiny house on chassis does not have a permanent foundation, and may be installed with or without wheels/tires.

- Freeze protected utility connections would be required.
- The tiny house on chassis would need to be constructed under a building permit and be in compliance with the 2012 International Residential Code, and 2018 International Residential Code Appendix Q (if adopted), and be issued a Certificate of Approval by the Building Official, prior to use as a dwelling unit.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Action Plan

Recommended Motions:

I move to recommend that staff develop a draft ordinance that would amend Title 22 of the Sitka General Code to allow tiny-houses-on-chassis as accessory dwelling units (ADU's), in all areas where ADU's are currently allowed by code.

Note: if the Commission believes that this concept is not worth developing further, a Commissioner can make the motion in the affirmative and the Commission could vote against.

OR

I move to recommend that staff continue to research and work through the issues and concerns raised in tonight's deliberations and return with a revised proposal.