



# City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street • Sitka, Alaska 99835

*Coast Guard City, USA*

## Memorandum

**To:** Chair Spivey and Planning Commission  
**From:** Amy Ainslie, Director, Planning and Community Development  
**Subject:** **Platting Variance for Platting Action 19-08**  
**Date:** January 9, 2020

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P 19-08 is a platting action to create a hybrid minor subdivision resulting in five lots at 2370 Halibut Point Road. The Commission previously considered the preliminary plat at the December 18, 2019 meeting. It was identified in the staff report that as more than 4 lots would be connecting to a private utility system, the applicant would need to obtain a platting variance. The code reference for this requirement is sited in SGC 21.40.030B which states "...No more than four lots shall be served by private utility easements", and the five-lot hybrid minor subdivision proposal exceeds this limitation.

The applicant, Michael Tisher, has worked diligently with City staff as well as other regulatory agencies such as DEC to ensure that the utility infrastructure will be more than adequate for the proposed residential demand. Mr. Tisher has planned for an 8" sewer line which is City standard for a major subdivision. Mr. Tisher has also incurred the expense of installing buried electric lines to the area. Water is available from Kramer Avenue. Easements have been developed to provide for all these services.

### **SGC 21.48.010 Requirements for Platting Variances**

A variance from the requirements of this title may be granted only if the planning commission finds that:

- A. The granting of the platting variance will not be detrimental to the public safety, or welfare, or injurious to adjacent property.
- B. The tract to be subdivided is of such unusual size and shape or topographical conditions that the strict application of the requirements of this title will result in undue and substantial hardship to the owner of the property.

Tying into the private utility system is the most plausible means of developing the area. The lot is not suited to a large right-of-way through which to extend public facilities – the topographic challenges alone would make this extremely difficult. Further, municipal resources are limited; the expansion of utility systems for private residential development have not been budgeted or prioritized. Building and platting rights-of-way as required for a major subdivision in this area would be cost and space prohibitive, making the development of the land far less feasible.

Due to these considerations, staff finds that the granting of this platting variance will not be detrimental to public safety, welfare, or be injurious to adjacent property owners and in fact better enables development of vacant adjacent properties. Staff finds that the halt of municipal development in the area warrants special consideration, and that strict application of the limitations for connections to private utilities would result in an undue burden. The request is also consistent with Comprehensive Plan housing goals to “expand the range, affordability, and quality of housing Sitka while maintaining attractive, livable neighborhoods.”

**Attachments:**

Attachment A: Preliminary Plat

Attachment B: Applicant Materials

**Recommended Motions:**

1. “I move to approve the platting variance to connect more than four properties to a private utility system at 2370 Halibut Point Road in the R-1 MH single-family, duplex, and manufactured home district. The properties are also known as Lot 1 Oceanview Ridge Subdivision and Lot 4 West Woodbury Subdivision. The request is filed by Michael Tisher. The owners of record are Glenda and Michael Tisher.”
2. “I move to adopt the required findings for platting variances.”
  - A. The granting of the platting variance will not be detrimental to the public safety, or welfare, or injurious to adjacent property.
  - B. The tract to be subdivided is of such unusual size and shape or topographical conditions that the strict application of the requirements of this title will result in undue and substantial hardship to the owner of the property.