

filed by Howard Merkel. The owner of record was Howard Merkel. Motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

M-Mudry/S-Weaver moved to adopt the required findings for conditional use permits. Motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

H [ZA 19-06](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a zoning text change to amend Titles 6, 19, and 22 of the Sitka General Code to define Tiny Houses and Tiny Houses on Chassis and allow them in Mobile/Manufactured Home Parks. The request is filed by the Planning and Community Development Department.

Attachments: [memo- update to commission 8Jan20](#)
[StaffReport ZA 19-06- 11Dec19](#)
[Action Plan -Tiny Homes, sm dwellings - Draft](#)
[IRC Appendix Q-Tiny Houses](#)
[amending Title 6 ver2 11Dec19](#)
[amending title 19 adopting appendix Q 11Dec19](#)
[amending title 22 - ver2 11Dec19](#)
[Application](#)

Windsor stated he did not want to take any action on the following item given that two Commissioners were absent. Brylinsky was agreeable and felt there was enough substance in the next three items that it warranted discussion and direction.

Brylinsky reviewed the Assembly's action plan on tiny houses and noted that the following proposal directly addressed actions 2b and 2c of the plan. Brylinsky described the overall needed changes for tiny houses to become feasible housing options was to first create a designation in our codes for tiny houses to be built and used, and secondly to find more placement options for such structures. Brylinsky covered details in Appendix Q of the International Residential Code that made new provisions for tiny houses, which were classified as dwelling units less than 400 square feet in size. Brylinsky highlighted the code changes in stair requirements, and provisions for egress for lofts. Overall, the zoning text change accomplished the following: defined tiny houses and established building code requirements for tiny houses, allowed tiny houses on chassis to be placed in mobile/manufactured home parks, allowed tiny houses on permanent foundations to be built in mobile/manufactured home parks, changed the maximum structure height in mobile/manufactured home parks to be increased from 14 feet to 16 feet, and established installation and construction material requirements for tiny houses.

Mudry stated some concern about the total height of a tiny house on chassis exceeding 14 feet due to possible electric line interference. Windsor asked about anchoring and wind resistance for tiny houses on chassis. Brylinsky answered that tiny houses on chassis would require similar anchoring to manufactured homes.

Commissioners and Staff had a broad discussion about tiny houses - particularly on chassis. Windsor recalled that the Commission had considered similar proposal a few years prior, and wondered if it was productive to rehash that conversation. Ainslie stated that she felt a few critical factors had changed since the last consideration of tiny houses. First, at the time of previous discussions, it was not known whether tiny houses would continue to be a growing trend and therefore whether or not there was truly a community need for code revisions. Ainslie affirmed that the tiny house trend

had continued to grow locally and nationally as well. Secondly, when last considered, there was no building code framework for which tiny houses could be evaluated for their safety and soundness of construction. Now that the IRC had created Appendix Q, there was now a framework for the building department to use in evaluating tiny houses. Windsor asked why the chassis was a necessary/attractive option. Ainslie and Brylinsky described the versatility of a movable structure and the temporary/transient need tiny houses on chassis could fill.

Building Official, Pat Swedeen spoke on some of the building code aspects. Swedeen stated that tiny houses have long been allowable under the building code; the major change in this proposal was the chassis. Swedeen felt comfortable administering Appendix Q; a bigger challenge would be inspecting tiny houses built out of town. Some tiny houses built out of state were not built to any code requirement. Swedeen also wanted to make clear the need for egress out of loft areas which would be required for Sitka tiny houses. His main concern and focus for tiny houses was ensuring life/safety.

Richard Wein discussed a few ideas and concerns. First, Wein stated that a major difference between a tiny house on a permanent foundation versus being on a chassis would be the property tax value. Wein wondered how different a tiny house truly is from a recreational vehicle. Placement in landslide zones could be dangerous, as Wein thought a non-anchored structure such as a tiny house on chassis could act as a projectile in a landslide event. Wein noted these structures could be good for seasonal and transient populations, both of which were growing demographics in Sitka. There would be a need to educate the public on what they could or could not buy to then place in Sitka. Wein also stated that some tiny houses had a challenged ability to dissipate odor.

M-Mudry/S-Weaver moved to recommend that staff continue to research and work through the issues and concerns raised in the evening's deliberations and return with a revised proposal. Motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

I [MISC 19-20](#)

Discussion/Direction on allowing Tiny Houses on Chassis as Accessory Dwelling Units.

Attachments: [discuss-direct tinyhome on chassis as ADU's-memo to PC 11Dec19](#)

Brylinsky noted that the objective of the next two items was to expand options for placement of tiny houses. At the previous meeting, there was some support for the idea of allowing tiny houses, particularly on chassis, as ADUs. The code currently does not allow RV's or tiny houses on chassis to be used. While staff did not feel there should be changes to the prohibition on RV's as ADUs, perhaps given the proposed building and aesthetic code changes, as well as requirements for freeze-protected utility connections, tiny houses on chassis could be reconsidered for ADU use.

Windsor asked for clarification on whether or not ADUs were a conditional use, Ainslie and Brylinsky discussed some of the requirements for ADUs, and when it was a permitted or conditional use. Weaver stated that his preference to not have tiny houses on chassis as they were not as durable. Windsor echoed the preference for ADUs to be on a permanent foundation.

Richard Wein thought that between the reduction in lot sizes, the adoption of ADUs, and the use of tiny houses, some headway on affordable housing could be made. Wein wished to see this idea more fleshed out before ruling it out. Wein pointed to other stabilization methods used for manufactured homes that could be employed for tiny homes as well to increase their stability and durability.