



City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street • Sitka, Alaska 99835

Coast Guard City, USA

Planning and Community Development Department

AGENDA ITEM:

Case No: P 20-01
Proposal: Final Plat for a Lot Merger
Applicant: Michael Coady
Owner: Michael Coady
Location: Middle Island
Legal: Lots 3, 4, and 5, Block 1, Middle Island Subdivision
Zone: LI – Large island district
Size: Current: Lot 3: 1.82 acres, Lot 4: .89 acres, Lot 5: 1.29 acres
Proposed: 4.00 acres
Parcel ID: 4-920-1003, 4-920-1004, 4-920-005
Existing Use: Lodge
Adjacent Use: Recreational residential, undeveloped
Utilities: Private utilities
Access: Water

KEY POINTS AND CONCERNS:

1. The Commission reviewed and approved a conceptual plat of this proposal on March 4, 2020.
2. The applicant owns all three lots in question and is functionally utilizing the properties for a single purpose (lodge – granted through conditional use). Lot merger allows applicant to use lot more flexibly for structure placement.
3. The proposed replat complies with the Sitka General Code Titles 21 and 22 by moving the property toward code conformance; one of the existing lots is substandard for the district.
4. Platting of lots as single lot should not change impact on neighborhood outside of current use.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the final plat for a lot merger for Lots 3, 4 and 5, Block 1, Middle Island Subdivision.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Aerial

Attachment B: Current Plat

Attachment C: Final Plat

Attachment D: Applicant Materials

BACKGROUND

This property consists of three lots held between a common owner, Michael Coady. Mr. Coady purchased the lots in order to run a lodge operation utilizing all three lots. A conditional use permit was granted to Mr. Coady by the Planning Commission in December of 2017 for this use. An outstanding condition of approval at the time was for Mr. Coady to resolve the encroachment of a structure on the State's public access easement, which Mr. Coady has since completed. Mr. Coady continues to work in good faith with the Building and Planning Departments on his development of the lots.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This request is to replat the three lots into one lot. Mr. Coady is functionally using all three lots as a single unit to run the lodge operation, as recognized by the fact that the conditional use permit spans all three lots. SGC 22.20 outlines the development standards for the Large Island (LI) district. In island zones, including LI, there is a required 15 ft. setback along common property lines. The merging of these three lots provides the owner more flexibility to develop the area without as many restrictions regarding setbacks and encroachments over the property lines. It would also be more efficient for Mr. Coady to have one property tax bill rather than three separate bills.

Staff recommends approval of the lot merger from both a code administration standpoint, and a practical standpoint. One of the lots, Lot 4, is currently a non-conforming lot, as it is .89 acres which does not meet the district minimum of 1 acre. The lot merger would address this nonconformity. From a practical standpoint, the investment in the integrated infrastructure needed to run the property as a lodge means these lots would have limited marketability as individual lots, and if sold, would most likely transfer ownership together. The lot merger is therefore a recognition of the lots interconnected nature and status as a single economic unit.

ANALYSIS

Project/Site: A large house structure is located on Lot 3 along with several out-buildings including the bunkhouse, 2 guest cabins, a smokehouse, shed, and garage/barn structure. Lot 4 has one guest cabin, and Lot 5 is sparsely developed.

Density: The proposed lot merger does not waive or alter any density or coverage standards for the properties, so the lot merger could not result in a denser development overall than is currently permitted. However, the lot coverage maximum is 25% of the lot as listed in SGC Table 22.20-1 Development Standards for the LI district. Therefore, denser development could occur in one area (one lot) than previously permitted, however, a total of 3.0 acres would still need to be preserved as open space.

Traffic: The replat would not change existing boat/pedestrian traffic patterns.

Parking: N/A

Noise: No concerns, as the proposed land use does not differ from the current use.

Public Health or Safety: No concerns.

Habitat: No concerns.

Property Value or Neighborhood Harmony: As the use will not change, impact to the neighborhood beyond current use is not anticipated. The properties are interdependent due to centralized lodge infrastructure, and therefore already operate as an economic unit. The proposed lot merger is a better reflection of the current use and future value of the lots.

Comprehensive Plan: The proposal supports the Comprehensive Plan Economic Development Action ED 6.5 which aims to “Support growth of Sitka’s independent, cruise-related, and heritage tourism work and enterprises” by giving the owner the ability to more flexibly and creatively develop his lodge operation while still preserving open space.

RECOMMENDED MOTIONS

1) “I move to approve the final plat for a lot merger of Lots 3, 4, and 5, Block 1, Middle Island Subdivision in the LI Large Island district. The request is filed by Michael Coady. The owner of record is Michael Coady.”

2) “I move to adopt the findings as listed in the staff report.”

Staff recommends the following findings:

- a. That the final plat of the lot merger complies with the Comprehensive Plan and Sitka General Code Titles 21 and 22 by moving the properties toward code conformance, and;
- b. That the final plat of the lot merger is not be injurious to public health, safety, and welfare.