



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: **Setbacks to Tidelands**
Date: June 12, 2020

The Commission has expressed an interest in amending the zoning code to decrease (or eliminate) setbacks to filled, intertidal, and submerged tidelands in all zoning districts. Currently, the zoning code does not make an allowance for eliminating or modifying setback requirements if a property line is adjacent to tidelands except in the Waterfront zoning district and in the Gary Paxton Industrial Park zoning district.

The usual justifications for setback requirements are:

- Safe ingress and egress from a property
- Preserving open space
- Provide buffering between properties
- Reinforcing fire separation requirements

These same justifications may not apply to setbacks for property lines adjacent to tidelands. However, filled tidelands may be buildable, so fire separation may still need to be maintained. Discussion question: Should the zoning code make reference to checking fire separation distances with the Building Department/Official, or leave that up to the permitting process to catch?

Potential motion: **“I move to direct staff to prepare a zoning text change that would (eliminate/reduce) setbacks from property lines adjacent to filled, intertidal, or submerged tidelands.”**