



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Draft

Planning Commission

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Chris Spivey (Chair), Darrell Windsor (arrived 7:01PM), Wendy Alderson, Katie Riley
Absent: Stacy Mudry (Excused)
Staff: Amy Ainslie, Ben Mejia
Public: Alexander Allison, Sarah Allison, Jay Sweeney, Ariadne Will (Sitka Sentinel)

Chair Spivey called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 21-08](#) Approve the May 5, 2021 meeting minutes.

**M-Riley/S-Alderson moved to approved the May 5, 2021 meeting minutes.
Motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.**

B [PM 21-09](#) Approve the May 5, 2021 special meeting minutes.

M-Riley/S-Alderson moved to approved the May 5, 2021 special meeting minutes. Motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie reminded the Commission of the tourism planning attractions and excursions forum at 7pm on May 20th. Ainslie told the Commission that the short-term rental community survey had been published and received over 240 responses so far and would remain open until end of day on May 26th. Ainslie informed the Commission that should would be out of office from May 27th to the 31st and city offices would be closed May 31st in observance of Memorial Day.

VI. REPORTS

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

C [CUP 21-07](#) Public hearing and consideration of a conditional use permit for a

short-term rental at Thomsen Harbor, Float B, Slip 30 in the P- Public Lands district. The property is also known as a portion of ATS 15. The request is filed by Alexander and Sarah Allison. The owner of record is Alexander Allison.

Ainslie introduced the request for a short-term rental(STR) on a boat in Thomsen Harbor. Ainslie informed the Commission of the 2017 STR on Boats Plan which established process and limits the number of STRs to 2 per harbor and no more than 10 in total. Ainslie explained that as part of the process, the application had been sent to the Harbor Department for review by Ports and Harbors Commission, and received their approval on May 12th. Ainslie noted that the Ports and Harbors Commission were supportive of the application, and appreciated the level of detail included in the renter handout.

Ainslie explained that the vessel, M/V Sound Judgment, could accommodate up to 5 guests and was likely only to generate 1 car for parking and traffic concerns, though the applicants felt that many renters may choose not to use a car. Ainslie acknowledged that noise and odor were present in the harbor as a working harbor, and guests were asked to be respectful in terms of noise generation. Ainslie noted that the vessel had received a safety inspection from the Coast Guard on May 7th, 2021. Ainslie explained that guests would not be permitted to operate the vessel and that the owner would be in town to manage and mitigate potential impacts. Staff recommended approval.

The applicants, Alexander and Sarah Allison, were present. A. Allison informed the Commission that he had used the vessel as a live-aboard until he moved inland last year. The applicants felt that the proposal provided a unique STR opportunity for visitors and reduced the burden of visitor accommodations.

Windsor asked if Coast Guard required a captain onboard for STRs. Spivey recalled that this had been discussed but only if the vessel would be operated during STR. The Commission saw no issue with the application.

Having no further questions, the Commission excused the applicants.

M-Alderson/S-Windsor moved to approve the conditional use permit for a short-term rental located on the M/V Sound Judgment in Thomsen Harbor Float B, Slip #30 in the P Public lands zone. The property was also known as a portion of ATS 15. The application was filed by Alexander and Sarah Allison. The owner of record was Alexander Allison. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M-Alderson/S-Windsor moved to approve and adopt the required findings conditional use permits as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

D [MISC 21-11](#)

Discussion/Direction to change the regular meeting time from 7:00 pm on the first and third Wednesday each month to 7:30 pm on the first and third Wednesday each month.

The Commission unanimously agreed to the meeting time change. Windsor asked if the same process would be required to revert the time back to regular hours. Ainslie confirmed that public notice and a vote would be necessary.

M-Windsor/S-Riley moved to change the regular meeting time from 7:00pm on the first and third Wednesday of each month to 7:30pm on the first and third

Wednesday of each month. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

E [MISC 21-09](#)

Discussion/Direction on Short-Term Tourism Plan

Ainslie introduced the item as an opportunity for the Commission to prepare the format of the attractions and excursions forum on May 20th as well as the questions that would be helpful in initiating conversation. Ainslie noted that the downtown business forum was scheduled for Thursday June 3rd.

Alderson noted that including possibilities for scaled responses according to the number of passengers in a day would be good to include. Riley noted that impact cruise passengers have on independent travelers may be an important consideration.

Ainslie stated that the June 2nd hour long special meeting would be an opportunity for increased public engagement.

The Commission identified suggested drop-off points, areas to avoid, general concerns, suggested infrastructural improvements, and suggested process improvements as starting questions for the attractions and excursions forum.

The Commission opened the floor for public comment. Jay Sweeney of the Island Artists Gallery expressed a need for increased public outreach, and suggested a letter to the editor may provide increased visibility as current public notice is often buried in the center of the newspaper. Sweeney also voiced his concern that tourists be directed to the city to increase opportunities for downtown businesses.

Alderson asked if it would be appropriate for Commissioners to write letters to the editor regarding the tourism planning effort. Ainslie stated that this would be appropriate.

No action taken.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objection, Chair Spivey adjourned the meeting at 7:43pm.