



Application for Appointment to Boards, Committees, and Commissions City and Borough of Sitka

Board/Commission/Committee: Planning Commission

Name: Catherine Riley Preferred Phone: _____

Address: _____ Alternate Phone: _____

Email Address: _____ Fax Number: _____

Length of Residence in Sitka: 29 years Registered to vote in Sitka? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Employer: Sitka Conservation Society

Organizations you belong to or participate in:

Sitka Conservation Society (member, employee); Sitka Sockeyes Rugby Team (player and board member); Climate Action Task Force (vice chair)



Explain your main reason for applying:

I have really enjoyed volunteering on the Planning Commission and feel fortunate to contribute my thoughts and expertise to efforts including the short-term tourism plan, examining the short-term rental situation in Sitka, and exploring different opportunities to increase affordable and diverse housing.

What background, experience or credentials will you bring to the board, commission, or committee membership?

I have served on the planning commission for a year now, and I will continue to bring the perspective of the next generation of Sitkans to the board. Through my employment and other volunteer positions, I also bring experience and expertise in federal policy, USDA policy and opportunities, and climate solutions.

Please disclose any potential conflicts of interest that may arise from your appointment. These may include but are not limited to:

- A substantial financial interest of \$1000 annually that could be influenced by your appointment.
- An immediate family member employed within the scope of this appointment.

n/a

Please attach a letter of interest, outline, or resume which includes your education, work, and volunteer experience that will enhance your membership.

→ (To be considered, your application must be complete AND be accompanied by one of the above supporting documents.)

Date: 10/2/2021 Signature: Kate Riley

Your complete application and resume should be returned to the Municipal Clerk's Office by noon on the Wednesday prior to an advertised Assembly meeting.

Please note: all information submitted will be made public and published online. Appointments are normally made during open session of an Assembly meeting, however, Assembly members may vote to discuss applicant(s) in closed executive session. In this case, do you wish to be present when your application is discussed? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Return to:

Jess Earnshaw, Deputy Clerk/Records Specialist, 100 Lincoln Street
Fax: 907-747-7403 Email: cityclerk@cityofsitka.org

October 2, 2021

Dear Sitka Assembly Members,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve my community as a Planning commissioner over the past year. It has been a great learning opportunity and I have thoroughly enjoyed my time on the commission. I look forward to serving a full term if the Assembly chooses to reappoint me.

I originally applied to be on the planning commission because I wanted to dedicate my time and experience as a young Sitkan to be involved in shaping what the future of our town looks like. I was primarily concerned with issues that were affecting the livability and affordability of Sitka for myself and my peers, including the lack of affordable housing opportunities, proliferation of short-term rentals, and sustainable development driven by community priorities. When I was on the commission, I initiated action to address these concerns, including working with the Planning department to conduct a community survey on short-term rentals that received approximately 300 responses, and attempting to reform our zoning use tables to make alternative housing solutions, such as accessory dwelling units, easier for community members to pursue.

When the Assembly tasked the Planning Department and the Planning Commission with coming up with a short-term tourism plan to deal with the +400,000 tourists that are expected in Sitka next summer, I encouraged the assembly to invest in a professional consultant for this work. However, as we continue on the City's chosen path I feel that Planning Director Ainslie and Planner Meija have done an exceptional job, as well as my fellow commissioners, in comprehensively examining the issues, potential impacts, and opportunities available to us as we head into the future. During this process, I have sought to increase my peers understanding and participation in this effort through a variety of outreach methods, as I believe young Sitkans need to take a leading role in defining what kind of tourism we want to see for the future of our community. I have also sought to incorporate a climate-solution lens throughout this process, because I think there is a lot of opportunity for solutions that benefit our planet, our visitors, our economy, and the quality of life for our locals.

If I am re-appointed to the Planning commission, I look forward to continuing to work on the short-term tourism plan and improving Sitka's walkability and public transit, while ensuring that we balance the interests of large-scale cruise tourism with the ability of our town to attract high-value independent travelers. I also look forward to continuing to pursue common-sense, pragmatic short-term rental policies that take into account the need and demand for this type of visitor housing, while protecting the ability of local workers and community members to find long-term rental housing opportunities. I will continue working on finding ways to increase alternative affordable housing solutions when the Assembly and the planning commission meet to discuss the zoning code use tables.

Thank you for giving me the chance to serve my community in this capacity, and for considering my application to continue doing so.

Sincerely,
Katie Riley