



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Darrell Windsor (Acting Chair), Wendy Alderson, Stacy Mudry, Katie Riley, Thor Christianson (Assembly liaison)
Absent: Chris Spivey (excused)
Staff: Amy Ainslie, Kim Davis
Public: Sheldon Turner, Ramon Quintero-Martinez, Thad Poulson, Heather Meuret, Keith Brady, Mary Todd Anderson, Jasen Anderson, Sue Riggs, Lee Demmert, Bonnie Brenner, Mike and Anne Morris, Samuel Pointer, Greg Blankenship, Kathy and Scott McLeod, Norma Novcaski, R.J. Miller, Ariadne Will (Sitka Sentinel)

Acting Chair Windsor called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Commissioners voted to elect a new Chair and Vice Chair.

M-Windsor/S-Mudry moved to elect Chris Spivey as Chair. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M-Mudry/S-Alderson moved to elect Darrell Windsor as Vice Chair. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

IV. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 23-01](#)

M-Riley/S-Alderson moved to approve the December 7, 2022 meeting minutes. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

V. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

VI. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie reported the new GIS system was active and available to the public. For the benefit of the Commissioners and any of those in attendance, she would provide a demonstration at the end of the agenda.

VII. REPORTS

VIII. THE EVENING BUSINESS**B** [CUP 23-01](#)

Ainslie introduced a conditional use permit for a short-term rental (STR) at 109 Sand Dollar Drive. The main house had three bedrooms, three baths and a one bedroom apartment. The apartment was not included as part of the short-term rental. The max occupancy identified by the applicants was for twelve guests with parking designated for one car. The property was the applicant's primary dwelling unit. Staff recommended approval, but noted that guest maximum of twelve with only one parking space designated could be problematic and should be discussed with the applicant..

The applicant, Sheldon Turner, clarified for commissioners the twelve guests was including children. Commissioners suggested limiting the number of guests to eight adults. The applicant was amenable to this change, and stated that they would be downsizing the number of vehicles they owned to two, so there would be more parking available for guests to use.

A letter read into public comment from Dana and Howie Pitts stated parking was the major concern, as the applicants had two trucks and three cars parked in their driveway. There was a need for more parking if they were to use the house as a short-term rental. They were also concerned that twelve guests was too many.

Commissioners concurred that the maximum occupancy should be lowered to eight adults.

M/Mudry-S/Alderson moved to approve the conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 109 Sand Dollar Drive in the R-1-Single-Family/Duplex Residential District subject to the attached conditions of approval with the additional condition of an eight adult guest maximum. The property was also known as Lot 1, Sand Dollar Subdivision, according to Plat Number 88-8. The request was filed by Meggan Turner. The owners of record were Meggan and Sheldon Turner. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

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

C [CUP 23-02](#)

Ainslie introduced request is for a conditional use permit for short-term rental (STR) at 501 Sawmill Creek Road. This was the applicant's primary residence and they would be living off-site locally during the summer months. The house was a three bedroom, one bath with a maximum guest occupancy of six guests. There was ample parking for guests and the applicant would be providing bikes as well. Staff recommended approval.

The applicant, Ramon Quintero-Martinez, stated he would be using the STR for additional income for retirement. Quintero-Martinez stated he would be living in a trailer

he owned during the months the STR was rented and would be renting the trailer during the winter months.

Under public comment Thad Poulson, a neighboring property owner, had a question about another property owned by the applicant and the planning process regarding the density of STRs. Commissioners called the applicant back and asked about the other property use. Quintero-Martinez stated he rented the other property in question as a long-term rental. Commissioners asked staff to add STR density as an agenda item for future discussion.

M/Alderson-S/Mudry moved to approve the conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 501 Sawmill Creek Road in the R-2 - Multifamily Residential District subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 9A of the Forest Service Subdivision, as shown on Plat 2009-02. The request was filed by Ramon Quintero-Martinez. The owner of record was Ramon Quintero-Martinez. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

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

D [CUP 23-03](#)

Ainslie introduced a request for a conditional use permit for a quasi-institutional group residence at 1931 Dodge Circle to be operated by Youth Advocates of Sitka (YAS). Quasi-institutional homes were classified as a residential use by the zoning code and was a certain type of group residence. As this property was in an R-1 zone, the dwelling units were limited to six persons. YAS was planning to purchase the home for a transitional housing pilot program, serving youth who had been or were at risk of being trafficked. Ainslie cited the numerous conditions and limitations for clients in the program design including requirements for clients to be drug and alcohol free, enrollment in school or active employment, no personal vehicles or guests, and no activities on the premise outside of the home. Traffic was going to be limited to staff and carpooling to off site locations, which would be comparable with normal residential use of large families in each unit. Access was from a shared road with a easement maintenance agreement. There was limited day use with the clients being off site and YAS would be installing a security system for their clients safety and for neighborhood safety. Clients would be highly supervised when on site. While this was an intensive use of the property, the presence of staff would monitor and control the impact, potentially better than a long-term rental. With a long-term rental the neighborhood was unable to know when or how the unit was rented, to whom, or the amount of vehicles accessing the property. The mitigations in place were developed by an experience organization that would be operating in a licensed facility who needed a quiet and discrete presence. Finally, this use was supported in the comprehensive plan as a means of providing housing to at-risk populations and offering youth workforce development.

The applicant Heather Meuret, Executive Director of YAS and YAS board member Keith Brady were present. YAS would be operating a pilot program, Coastal Haven, to provide 24-7 residential mental health treatment, clinical services, life skills training, and employment services for youth ages 16-24 who were victims or at risk of human trafficking. One dwelling unit would be for females and one for males with a 1-5 staff-to-client ratio. They would be providing housing to Sitka youth first and there would be an on-site employee living in the house. In response to a questions from

Commissioners, Meuret provided the qualification levels of the providers who would be on site, and stated that youth could possibly stay in the unit from 90 to 500 days.

Under public comment Mary Todd Andersen stated her strong objection to the permit given the risk to the neighborhood and that she had helped gather around 30 signatures on a petition against the conditional use permit. A copy of the petition and all signatories was provided to the Commission. Public testimony was also given in person by Jasen Anderson, Sue Riggs, Bonnie Brenner, Lee Demmert, and Richard Riggs, and in writing from Stephanie Brenner and Andrew Stoner, and Coral Crenna. The prevalent concerns voiced in these public comments were that introduction of the program and client-base posed safety impacts to those living in the neighborhood, property values would be diminished as homes would be less marketable with the presence of the quasi-institutional home in the neighborhood, the character of the neighborhood would be adversely impacted, there would be a loss of long-term rental units, and that traffic and noise disturbances would substantially increase. Samuel Pointer and R.J. Miller shared personal stories of youths in their lives that would have benefited from this kind of facility and supported the proposal.

Commissioners deliberated, and shared a consensus that the overwhelming neighborhood objection to the proposal warranted denial. Windsor noted that the comments made in support of the proposal were made by those who do not live in the neighborhood. While Alderson and Riley shared the feeling that some of the concerns regarding impacts had been exaggerated or were rooted in fear and bias, and that there were elements of the, "not in my backyard" mentality in the opposing comments, they both agreed that the core issues regarding the maintenance of the single-family and duplex nature of the neighborhood, noise, and traffic impacts as voiced by neighborhood ultimately prevailed. Windsor added that the vote against the proposal was not a vote against YAS or the program, but rather the specific location in this case and wished them luck in pursuing an alternative. This sentiment was shared by the other Commissioners as well.

M-Mudry/S-Alderson moved to approve the conditional use permit for a quasi-institutional home at 1931 Dodge Circle in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 2, Ocean Heights Subdivision according to plat number 95-13. The request was filed by Youth Advocates of Sitka. The owner of record was Sitka Makai, LLC. Motion failed 0-4 by voice vote.

M-Alderson/S-Mudry moved that the required findings for conditional use permits could not be made because the proposal would adversely affect the established character of the surrounding vicinity due to its incompatible use with R-1 zoning, and the unified dissent of the neighborhood indicated high potential for neighborhood disharmony. This disharmony would also impact the ability of the proposal to meet its stated purpose. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

E [MISC 23-02](#)

Ainslie opened the online GIS tool and provided an overview of functionality and tools available.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objections, Acting Chair Windsor adjourned the meeting at 9:24 PM.